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THE MAHABHARATA

OF

KRISHNA-DWAIPAYANA VYASA

TRANSLATED

INTO

ENGLISH PROSE.

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BY

PRATAPA CHANDRA RAY, C. I. E.

GANTI PARVA.

(SECTIONS CXXXVIII—CLIII.)



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of his two companions, he of great forethought and considerable intelligence immediately set out by a current and reached another deep lake.¹¹ The fishermen, seeing that all the water had been baled out, shut in the fishes that remained by diverse means.¹² Then they began to agitate the little water that remained, and as they began to catch the fish, the procrastinating *Cakula* was caught with many others.¹³ When the fishermen began to tie to a long string the fishes they had caught, the *Cakula* who was noted for presence of mind thrust himself into the company of those that had been so tied and remained quietly among them,¹⁴ biting the string, for he thought that he should do it to give the appearance of being caught. The fishermen believed that all the fishes attached to the string had been caught.¹⁵ They then removed them to a piece of deep water for washing them. Just at that time the *Cakula* noted for presence of mind, leaving the string, quickly escaped.¹⁶ That fish, however, who had been procrastinating, foolish and senseless and without intelligence as he was, and, therefore, unable to escape, met with his death.¹⁷

"Thus every one meets with destruction, like the procrastinating fish, who from want of intelligence cannot divine the hour of danger.¹⁸ That man, again, who regarding himself clever does not seek his own good in proper time, incurs great danger like the *Cakula* who had presence of mind.¹⁹ Hence these two only, viz., he that has much forethought and he that has presence of mind, succeed in obtaining happiness. He, however, that is procrastinating meets with destruction.²⁰ Diverse are the divisions of time, such as *Kshthā*, *Kala*, *Muhurta*, day, night, *Lava*, month, fortnight, the six seasons, *Kalpa*, year.²¹ The divisions of the Earth are called place. Time cannot be seen. As regards the success of any object or purpose, it is achieved or not achieved according to the manner in which the mind is set to think of it.²² These two, viz., the person of forethought and the person of presence of mind, have been declared by the *Rishis* to be the foremost of men in all treatises on morality and profit and in those dealing with emancipation.²³ One, however, that does everything after reflection and scrutiny, one that avails of proper means for

the accomplishment of one's objects, always succeeds in achieving much. Those again that act with due regard to time and place succeed in winning results better than the mere man of foresight and the man of presence of mind.' "¹⁰

SECTION CXXXVIII.

"Yudhishthira said,—'Thou hast, O bull of Bharata's race, said that that intelligence which provides against the future, as well as that which can meet present emergencies, is everywhere superior, while procrastination brings about destruction.¹ I desire, O grandsire, to hear of that superior intelligence aided by which a king, conversant with the scriptures and well versed with morality and profit, may not be stupefied even when surrounded by many foes.² I ask thee this, O chief of Kuru's race! It behoveth thee to discourse to me on this!³ I desire to hear everything, conformable to what has been laid down in the scriptures, about the manner in which a king should conduct himself when he is assailed by many foes.⁴ When a king falls into distress, a large number of foes, provoked by his past acts, range themselves against him and seek to vanquish him.⁵ How may a king, weak and alone, succeed in holding up his head when he is challenged on all sides by many powerful kings leagued together?⁶ How does a king at such times make friends and foes! How should he, O bull of Bharata's race, behave at such a time towards both friends and foes?⁷ When those that have all the indications of friends really become his foes, what should the king then do if he is to obtain happiness?⁸ With whom should he make war and with whom should he make peace? Even if he be strong, how should he behave in the midst of foes!⁹ O scorcher of foes, this I regard to be the highest of all questions connected with the discharge of kingly duties. There are few men for listening to the answer of this question and none to answer it¹⁰ save Gāntanu's son Bhishma firmly wedded to truth and having all his senses under control! O thou that art highly blessed, reflect upon it and discourse to me on it'¹¹'

"Bhishma said,—'O Yudhishtira, this question is certainly worthy of thee! Its answer is fraught with great happiness. Listen to me, O son, as I declare to thee, O Bhārata, all the duties not generally known that should be practised in seasons of distress.¹³ A foe becomes a friend, and a friend also becomes a foe. The course of human actions, through the combination of circumstances, becomes very uncertain.¹⁴ As regards, therefore, what should be done and what should not, it is necessary that paying heed to the requirements of time and place, one should either trust one's foes or make war.¹⁵ One should, even exerting one's self to one's best, make friends with men of intelligence and knowledge that desire one's welfare. One should make peace with even one's foes, when, O Bhārata, one's life-breaths cannot otherwise be saved.¹⁶ That foolish man who never makes peace with foes, never succeeds in winning any gain or acquiring any of those fruits for which others endeavour.¹⁷ He again who makes peace with foes and quarrels with even friends after a full consideration of circumstances, succeeds in obtaining great fruits.¹⁸ In this connection is cited the old story of the discourse between a cat and a mouse at the foot of a banian.'¹⁹

"Bhishma continued,—'There was a large banian in the midst of an extensive forest. Covered with many kinds of creepers, it was the resort of diverse kinds of birds.²⁰ It had a large trunk from which numerous branches extended in all directions. Delightful to look at, the shade it afforded was very refreshing. It stood in the midst of the forest, and animals of diverse species lived on it.²¹ A mouse of great wisdom, named Palita, lived at the foot of that tree, having made a hole there with a hundred outlets.²² On the branches of the tree there lived a cat, of the name of Lomaça, in great happiness, daily devouring a large number of birds.²³ Sometime after, a Chandala came into the forest and built a hut for himself. Every evening after sunset he spread his traps.²⁴ Indeed, spreading his nets made of leathern strings he went back to his hut, and happily passing the night in sleep, returned to the spot at the dawn of day.²⁵ Diverse kinds of animals fell into his traps every night. And it so

happened that one day the cat, in a moment of heedlessness, was caught in the snare.²² O thou of great wisdom, when his foe the cat who was at all times an enemy of the mouse species was thus caught in the net, the mouse Palita came out of his hole and began to rove about fearlessly.²³ While trustfully roving through the forest in search of food, the mouse after a little while saw the meat (that the *Chandala* had spread there as lure).²⁴ Getting upon the trap, the little animal began to eat the flesh. Laughing mentally, he even got upon his enemy entangled helplessly in the net.²⁵ Intent on eating the flesh, he did not mark his own danger, for as he suddenly cast his eyes he saw a terrible foe of his arrived at that spot.²⁶ That foe was none else than a restless mongoose of coppery eyes, of the name of Harita. Living in underground holes, its body resembled the flower of a reed.²⁷ Allured to that spot by the scent of the mouse, the animal came there with great speed for devouring his prey. And he stood on his haunches, with head upraised, licking the corners of his mouth with his tongue.²⁸ The mouse beheld at the same time another foe living in the holes of trees, then sitting on the branch of the banian. It was a night-wandering owl of the name of Chandraka of sharp beaks.²⁹ Having become an object of sight with both the mongoose and the owl, the mouse, in great alarm, began to think in this strain.—At such a season of great danger, when death itself is staring me in the face, when there is fear on every side, how should one act that wishes for one's good?³⁰—Encompassed on all sides by danger, seeing fear in every direction, the mouse, filled with alarm for his safety, made a high resolution.—Warding off even innumerable dangers by hundreds of means, one should always save one's life. Danger, at the present moment, encompasses me on every side!³¹ If I were to descend from this trap on the ground, without adequate precautions, the mongoose will surely seize and devour me. If I remain on this trap, the owl will surely seize me. If, again, the cat succeeds in disentangling himself from the net, he also is certain to devour me!³² It is not proper, however, that a person of our intelligence should lose his wits. I shall, therefore, strive my

best to save my life, aided by proper means and intelligence.⁴² A person possessed of intelligence and wisdom and conversant with the science of policy never sinks, however great and terrible the danger that threatens him.⁴³ At present, however, I do not behold any other refuge than this cat. He is an enemy. But he is in distress. The service that I can do him is very great.⁴⁴ Sought to be made a prey by three foes, how should I now act for saving my life? I should now seek the protection of one of those foes, *viz.*, the cat.⁴⁵ Taking the aid of the science of policy, let me counsel the cat for his good, so that I may, with my intelligence, escape from all the three.⁴⁶ The cat is my great foe, but the distress into which he has fallen is very great. Let me try whether I can succeed in making this foolish creature understand his own interests. Having fallen into such distress, he may make peace with me.⁴⁷ A person when afflicted by a stronger one should make peace with even an enemy. Professors of the science of policy say that even this should be the conduct of one who having fallen into distress seeks the safety of his life.⁴⁸ It is better to have a learned person for an enemy than a fool for a friend. As regards myself, my life now rests entirely in the hands of my enemy the cat.⁴⁹ I shall now address the cat on the subject of his own liberation. Perhaps, at this moment, it would not be wrong to take the cat for an intelligent and learned foo!—Even thus did that mouse, surrounded by foes, pursue his reflections.⁵⁰ Having reflected in this strain, the mouse, conversant with the science of Profit and well acquainted with occasions when war should be declared and peace made, gently addressed the cat, saying,⁵¹—I address thee in friendship, O cat! Art thou alive? I wish thee to live! I desire the good of us both!⁵² O amiable one, thou hast no cause for fear. Thou shalt live in happiness! I shall rescue thee, if, indeed, thou dost not slay me!⁵³ There is an excellent expedient in this case, which suggests itself to me, and by which you may obtain your escape and I may obtain great benefit.⁵⁴ By reflecting earnestly I have hit upon that expedient for thy sake and for my sake, for it will benefit both

of us.⁶¹ There are the mongoose and the owl, both waiting with evil intent. Only so long, O cat, as they do not attack me, is my life safe!⁶² There that wretched owl with restless glances and horrid cries is eyeing me from the branch of that tree! I am exceedingly frightened by it.⁶³ Friendship, as regards the good, is seven-paced.* Possessed of wisdom as thou art, thou art my friend. I shall act towards thee as a friend. Thou needst have no fear now.⁶⁴ Without my help, O cat, thou wilt not succeed in tearing the net. I, however, shall cut the net for serving thee, if thou abstain from killing me!⁶⁵ Thou hast lived on this tree and I have lived at its foot. Both of us have dwelt here for many long years. All this is known to thee.⁶⁶ He upon whom nobody places his trust, and he who never trusts another, are never applauded by the wise. Both of them are unhappy.⁶⁷ For this reason, let our love for each other increase, and let there be union amongst us both. Men of wisdom never applaud the endeavour to do an act when its opportunity has passed away.⁶⁸ Know that this is the proper time for such an understanding amongst us. I wish that thou shouldst live, and thou also wishest that I should live.⁶⁹ A man crosses a deep and large river by a piece of wood. It is seen that the man takes the piece of wood to the other side, and the piece of wood also takes the man to the other side.⁷⁰ Like this, our compact also will bring happiness to both of us. I will rescue thee, and thou also wilt rescue me!⁷¹—Having said these words that were beneficial to both of them, that were fraught with reason and on that account highly acceptable, the mouse Palita waited in expectation of an answer.⁷²

"Hearing these well-chosen words, fraught with reason and highly acceptable, that the mouse said, the mouse's foe possessed of judgment and forethought, viz., the cat, said these words in reply.⁷³ Endued with great intelligence, and possessed of eloquence, the cat, reflecting upon his own state, praised

* The meaning is that as regards good men, they become friends in no time. By taking only seven steps in a walk together, two such men become friends.—T.

the words of the speaker and honored him by gentle words in return.⁶⁵ Possessed of sharp foreteet and hhaving eyes that resembled the stones called *lapis lazuli*, the cat, called Lomaça, gently eyeing the mouse, answered as follows:⁶⁶—I am delighted with thee, O amiable one ! Blessed be thou that wishest me to live ! Do that, without hesitation, which thou thinkest to be of beneficial consequences!⁶⁷ I am certainly in great distress. Thou art, if possible, in greater distress still ! Let there be a compact between us without delay!⁶⁸ I will do that which is opportune and necessary for the accomplishment of our business, O puissant one ! If thou rescuest me, thy service will go for nothing.⁶⁹ I place myself in thy hands ! I am devoted to thee ! I shall wait upon and serve thee like a disciple ! I seek thy protection and shall always obey thy behests!⁷⁰—Thus addressed, the mouse Palita, addressing in return the cat who was completely under his control, said these words of grave import and high wisdom:⁷¹—Thou hast spoken most magnanimously. It could scarcely be unexpected from one like thee ! Listen to me as I disclose the expedient I have hit upon for benefitting both of us.⁷² I will crouch myself beneath thy body. I am exceedingly frightened at the mongoose ! Do thou save me ! Kill me not ! I am competent to rescue thee!⁷³ Protect me also from the owl, for that wretch too wishes to seize me for his prey. I shall cut the noose that entangles thee. I swear by Truth, O friend!⁷⁴—Hearing these judicious words fraught with reason, Lomaça, filled with delight, cast his eyes upon Palita and applauded him with exclamations of welcome.⁷⁵ Having applauded Palita, the cat, disposed to friendliness, reflected for a moment, and gladly said without losing any time,⁷⁶—Come quickly to me ! Blessed be thou, thou art, indeed, a friend dear to me as life ! O thou of great wisdom, through thy grace I have almost got back my life!⁷⁷ Whatever it is in my power to do for thee now, tell me and I shall do it. Let there be peace between us, O friend!⁷⁸ Liberated from this danger, I shaH, with all my friends and relatives, do all that may be agreeable and beneficial to thee,⁷⁹ O amiable one, freed from this distress, I

shall certainly seek to gladden thee, and worship and honor thee on every occasion in return for thy services."²¹ A person by doing even abundant services in return never becomes equal to the person that did him good in the first instance. The former does those services for the sake of services received. The latter, however, should be held to have acted without any such motive."²²"—'

"Bhishma continued,—'The mouse, having thus made the cat understand his own interests, trustfully crouched beneath his enemy's body."²³ Possessed of learning, and thus assured by the cat, the mouse trustfully laid himself thus under the breast of the cat as if it were the lap of his father or mother."²⁴ Beholding him thus ensconced within the body of the cat, the mungoose and the owl both became hopeless of seizing their prey."²⁵ Indeed, seeing that close intimacy between the mouse and the cat, both Harita and Chandraka became alarmed and filled with wonder."²⁶ Both of them had strength and intelligence. Clever in seizing their prey, though near, the mungoose and the owl felt themselves unable to wean the mouse and the cat from that compact."²⁷ Indeed, beholding the cat and the mouse make that covenant for accomplishing their mutual ends, the mungoose and owl both left that spot and went away to their respective abodes."²⁸ After this, the mouse Palita, conversant with the requirements of time and place, began, as he lay under the body of the cat, to cut the strings of the noose slowly, waiting for the proper time to finish his work."²⁹ Distressed by the strings that entangled him, the cat became impatient upon seeing the mouse slowly cutting away the noose."³⁰ Beholding the mouse employed so slowly in the work, the cat wishing to expedite him in the task, said:"—How is it, O amiable one, that thou dost not proceed with haste in thy work? Dost thou disregard me now, having thyself succeeded in thy object? O slayer of foes, do thou cut these strings quickly! The hunter will soon come here!"—Thus addressed by the cat who had become impatient, the mouse possessed of intelligence said these beneficial words fraught with his own good unto the cat who did not seem to possess much

wisdom!—Wait in silence, O amiable one! Expedition is not necessary! Drive all thy fears! We know the requirements of time. We are not wasting time!⁹² When an act is begun at an improper time, it never becomes profitable when accomplished. That act, on the other hand, which is began at the proper time, always produces splendid fruits.⁹³ If thou be freed at an improper time, I shall have to stand in great fear of thee! Therefore, do thou wait for the proper time. Do not be impatient, O friend!⁹⁴ When I shall see the hunter approach towards this spot armed with weapons, I shall cut the strings at that moment of fear to both of us!⁹⁵ Freed then, thou wilt ascend the tree. At that time thou wilt not think of anything else save the safety of thy life.⁹⁶ And when thou, O Lomaça, wilt fly away in fear, I shall enter my hole and thou wilt get upon the tree!—⁹⁷ Thus addressed by the mouse in words that were beneficial to him, the cat, possessed of intelligence and eloquence, and impatient of saving his life, replied unto the mouse in the following words.⁹⁸ Indeed, the cat, who had quickly and properly done his own part of the covenant, addressing the mouse who was not expeditious in discharging his part, said,⁹⁹—I rescued thee from a great danger with considerable promptness. Alas, honest persons never do the business of their friends in this way. Filled with delight while doing it, they do it otherwise!¹⁰⁰ Thou shouldst do what is for my good with greater expedition. O thou of great wisdom, do thou exert a little so that good may be done to both of us!¹⁰¹ If, on the other hand, remembering our former hostility thou art only suffering the time to slip away, know, O wicked wight, that the consequence of this act of thine will surely be to lessen the duration of thy own life!^{*102} If I have ever, before this, unconsciously done thee any wrong, thou shouldst not bear it in remembrance. I beg thy forgiveness. Be gratified with me!¹⁰³—After the cat had said these words, the mouse, possessed of intelligence and

* Virtue prolongs life, and sin and wickedness always shorten it. This is laid down almost everywhere in the Hindu scriptures.—T.

wisdom and knowledge of the scriptures, said these excellent words unto him :¹⁰⁴—I have, O cat, heard what thou hast said in furtherance of thy own object. Listen, however, to me as I tell thee what is consistent with my own objects !¹⁰⁵ That friendship in which there is fear and which cannot be kept up without fear, should be maintained with great caution like the hand (of the snake-charmer) from the snake's fangs !¹⁰⁶ The person that does not protect himself after having made a covenant with a stronger individual, finds that covenant to be productive of injury instead of benefit.¹⁰⁷ Nobody is nobody's friend ; nobody is nobody's well-wisher ; persons become friends or foes only from motives of interest.¹⁰⁸ Interest enlists interest even as tame elephants catch wild individuals of their species. After, again, an act has been accomplished, the doer is scarcely regarded. For this reason, all acts should be so done that something may remain to be done.¹⁰⁹ When I shall set thee free, thou wilt, afflicted by the fear of the hunter, fly away for thy life without ever thinking of seizing me.¹¹⁰ Behold, all the strings of this net have been cut by me. Only one remains to be cut ! I will cut that also with haste. Be comforted, O Lomaça !¹¹¹ —While the mouse and the cat were thus talking with each other, both in serious danger, the night gradually wore away. A great fear, however, penetrated the heart of the cat.¹¹² When at last morning came, the *Chandāla*, whose name was Parigha, appeared on the scene. His visage was frightful. His hair was black and twany. His hips were very large and his aspect was very fierce. Of a large mouth that extended from ear to ear, and exceedingly filthy, his ears were very long. Armed with weapons and accompanied by a pack of dogs, the grim-looking man appeared on the scene.¹¹³⁻¹⁴ Beholding that individual who resembled a messenger of Yama, the cat became filled with fear. Penetrated with fright, he addressed Palita and said,—What shalt thou do now ?¹¹⁵—The mouse very quickly cut the remaining string that held fast the cat. Freed from the noose, the cat ran with speed and got upon the banian.¹¹⁶ Palita also, freed from that situation of danger and from the presence of a terrible foe, quickly fled

and entered his hole. Lomaça meanwhile had climbed the high tree.¹¹⁷ The hunter, seeing everything, took up his net: His hopes frustrated, he also quickly left that spot.¹¹⁸ Indeed; O bull of Bharata's race, the *Chandāla* returned to his abode. Liberated from that great peril, and having obtained back his life which is so very valuable, the cat from the branches of that tree addressed the mouse Palita then staying within the hole, and said,¹¹⁹—Without having conversed with me, thou hast suddenly run away. I hope thou dost not suspect me of any evil intent? I am certainly grateful and thou hast done me a great service.¹²⁰ Having inspired me with trustfulness and having given me my life, why dost thou not approach me at a time when friends should enjoy the sweetness of friendship?¹²¹ Having made friends, he that forgets them afterwards, is regarded a wicked person and never succeeds in obtaining friends at times of danger and need.¹²² I have been, O friend, honored and served by thee to the best of thy power. It behoveth thee to enjoy the company of my poor self who has become thy friend.¹²³ Like disciples worshipping their preceptor, all the friends I have, all my relatives and kinsmen, will honor and worship thee!¹²⁴ I myself too shall worship thee with all thy friends and kinsmen. What grateful person is there that will not worship the giver of his life?¹²⁵ Be thou the lord of both my body and home! Be thou the disposer of all my wealth and possessions!¹²⁶ Be thou my honored counsellor and do thou rule me like a father! I swear by my life that thou hast no fear from us.¹²⁷ In intelligence thou art Uçanas himself. By the power of thy understanding thou hast conquered us. Possessed of the strength of policy, thou hast given us our life!¹²⁸—Addressed in such soothing words by the cat, the mouse, conversant with all that is productive of the highest good, replied in these sweet words that were beneficial to himself:¹²⁹—I have heard, O Lomaça, all that thou hast said. Listen now as I say what appears to me.¹³⁰ Friends should be well examined. Foes also should be well studied. In this world, a task like this is regarded by even the learned as a difficult one depending upon acute intelligence.¹³¹ Friends assume the guise of foes, and foes assume

the guise of friends. When compacts of friendship are formed, it is difficult for the parties to understand whether the other parties are really moved by lust and wrath.¹²² There is no such thing as a foe. There is no such thing in existence as a friend. It is force of circumstances that creates friends and foes.¹²³ He who regards his own interests ensured as long as another person lives and thinks them indangered when that other person will cease to live, takes that other person for a friend and considers him so as long as those interests of his are not clashed against.¹²⁴ There is no condition that deserves permanently the name either of friendship or hostility. Both friends and foes arise from considerations of interest and gain.¹²⁵ Friendship becomes changed into enmity in the course of time. A foe also becomes a friend. Self-interest is very powerful.¹²⁶ He who reposes blind trust on friends and always behaves with mistrust towards foes without paying any regard to considerations of policy, finds his life to be unsafe.¹²⁷ He who, disregarding all considerations of policy, sets his heart upon an affectionate union with either friends or foes, comes to be regarded as a person whose understanding has been unhinged.¹²⁸ One should not repose trust upon a person undeserving of trust, nor should one trust too much a person deserving of trust. The danger that arises from blind reposing of confidence is such that it cuts the very roots (of the person that reposes such confidence).¹²⁹ The father, the mother, the son, the maternal uncle, the sister's son, and other relatives and kinmen, are all guided by considerations of interest and profit.¹³⁰ Father and mother may be seen to discard the dear son if fallen.* People take care of their own selves. Behold the efficacy of self-interest!¹³¹ O thou that art possessed of great wisdom, his escape is very difficult who immediately after he is freed from danger seeks the means of his enemy's happiness!¹³² Thou camest down from the tree-top to this very spot. Thou couldst not, from levity of understanding, ascertain that a net had been spread here.¹³³ A

* I. e., if excepted for irreligious practices.—T.

person, possessed of levity of understanding, fails to protect his own self. How can he protect others? Such a person, without doubt, ruins all his acts.¹⁴⁴ Thou tellest me in sweet words that I am very dear to thee! Hear me, however, O friend, the reasons that exist on my side.¹⁴⁵ One becomes dear from an adequate cause. One becomes a foe from an adequate cause. This whole world of creatures is moved by the desire of gain (in some form or other). One never becomes dear to another (without cause).¹⁴⁶ The friendship between two uterine brothers, the love between husband and wife, depends upon interest. I do not know any kind of affection between any persons that does not rest upon some motive of self-interest.¹⁴⁷ If, as is sometimes seen, uterine brothers or husband and wife having quarreled reunite together from a natural affection, such a thing is not to be seen in persons unconnected with one another.¹⁴⁸ One becomes dear for one's liberality. Another becomes dear for his sweet words. A third becomes so in consequence of his religious acts. Generally, a person becomes dear for the purpose he serves.¹⁴⁹ The affection between us arose from a sufficient cause. That cause exists no longer. On the other hand, from adequate reason, that affection between us has come to an end.¹⁵⁰ What is that reason, I ask, for which I have become so dear to thee, besides thy desire of making me thy prey? Thou shouldst know that I am not forgetful of this.¹⁵¹ Time spoils reasons. Thou seekest thy own interests. Others, however, possessed of wisdom, understand their own interests. The world rests upon the example of the wise. Thou shouldst not address such words to a person possessed of learning and competent to understand his own interests.¹⁵² Thou art powerful. The reason of this affection that thou shonest for me now is ill-timed. Guided, however, by my own interests, I myself am firm in peace and war that are themselves very unstable.¹⁵³ The circumstances under which peace is to be made or war declared are changed as quickly as the clouds change their form. This very day thou wert my foe. This very day, again, thou wert my friend. This very day thou hast once more become my enemy. Behold the levity of the

considerations that move living creatures!¹⁵⁴ There was friendship between us as long as there was reason for its existence. That reason, dependant upon time, has passed away. Without it, that friendship also has passed away.¹⁵⁵ Thou art by nature my foe. From circumstances thou becomest my friend. That state of things has passed away. The old state of enmity that is natural has come back.¹⁵⁶ Thoroughly conversant as I am with the dictates of policy that have been thus laid down, tell me, why shall I enter today, for thy sake, the net that is spread for me?¹⁵⁷ Through thy power I was freed from a great danger. Through my power thou hast been freed from a similar danger. Each of us has served the other. There is no need of uniting ourselves again in friendly intercourse.¹⁵⁸ O amiable one, the object thou hadst has been accomplished. The object I had has also been accomplished. Thou hast now no need for me except to make me your food.¹⁵⁹ I am thy food. Thou art the eater. I am weak. Thou art strong. There cannot be a friendly union between us when we are situated so unequally.¹⁶⁰ I understand thy wisdom. Having been rescued from the net, thou applaudest me so that thou mayst succeed in easily making food of me.¹⁶¹ Thou wert entangled in the net for the sake of food. Thou hast been freed from it. Thou feelest now the pangs of hunger. Having recourse to that wisdom which arises from a study of the scriptures, thou seekest verily to eat me up today.¹⁶² I know that thou art hungry. I know that this is thy hour for taking food. Thou art seeking for thy prey, with thy eyes directed towards me.¹⁶³ Thou hast sons and wives. Thou seekest still friendly union with me and wishest to treat me with affection and do me services. O friend, I am incapable of acceding to this proposal.¹⁶⁴ Seeing me with thee, why will not thy dear spouse and thy loving children cheerfully eat me up?¹⁶⁵ I shall not, therefore, unite with thee in friendship. The reason no longer exists for such a union. If, indeed, thou dost not forget my good offices, think of what will be beneficial to me and be comfortable.¹⁶⁶ What person is there possessed of any wisdom that will place himself under the power of a foe that is not

distinguished for righteousness, that is in pangs of hunger, and that is on the look out for a prey!¹⁶⁷ Be happy then, I will presently leave thee. I am filled with alarm even if I behold thee from a distance. I shall not mingle with thee, cease in thy attempts, O Lomaça!¹⁶⁸ If thou thinkest that I have done thee a service, follow then the dictates of friendship when I may happen to rove trustfully or heedlessly. Even that will be gratitude in thee!¹⁶⁹ A residence near a person possessed of strength and power is never applauded. Even if the danger that existed be regarded to have passed away, I should always stand in fear of one more powerful than myself.¹⁷⁰ If thou dost not seek thy own interests (of the kind indicated), tell me then what is there that I should do for thee. I shall certainly give thee everything except my life.¹⁷¹ For protecting one's own self one should give up one's very children, and kingdom, and jewels, and wealth. One should sacrifice one's all for protecting one's own self.¹⁷² If a person lives he can recover all the affluence that he may have to give unto foes for protecting his life.¹⁷³ It is not desirable to give up life like one's wealth. Indeed, one's own self should always be protected by, as I have already said, giving up one's wives and wealth.¹⁷⁴ Persons who are mindful of protecting their own selves and who do all their acts after a proper consideration and survey, never incur danger as the consequence of their acts.¹⁷⁵ They that are weak always know him for a foe who is possessed of greater strength. Their understanding, firm in the truths of the scriptures, never loses its steadiness!¹⁷⁶—'

"Thus rebuked soundly by the mouse Palita, the cat, blushing with shame, addressed the mouse and said the following words.¹⁷⁷

"Lomaça said,—Truly I swear by thee that to injure a friend is in my estimation very censurable. I know thy wisdom. I know also that thou art devoted to my good.¹⁷⁸ Guided by the science of profit, thou hast said that there is cause for a breach between thee and me. It doth not behove thee, however, O good friend, to take me for what I am not!¹⁷⁹ I cherish a great friendship for thee in consequence

of thy having granted me my life. I am, again, acquainted with duties. I am an appreciator of other people's merits. I am very grateful for services received.¹⁸⁰ I am devoted to the service of friends. I am, again, especially devoted to thee. For these reasons, O good friend, it behoveth thee to reunite thyself with me.¹⁸¹ If I am commanded by thee, I can, with all my kinsmen and relatives, lay down my very life. They that are possessed of learning and wisdom see ample reason for placing their trust in persons of such mental disposition as ourselves. O thou that art acquainted with the truths of morality, it behoveth thee not to cherish any suspicion in respect of me!¹⁸²—Thus addressed by the cat, the mouse, reflecting a little, said these words of grave import unto the former.¹⁸³—Thou art exceedingly good! I have heard all that thou hast said and am glad to hear thee! For all that, however, I cannot trust thee! It is impossible for thee, by such eulogiums or by gifts of great wealth, to induce me to unite with thee again.¹⁸⁴ I tell thee, O friend, that they who are possessed of wisdom never place themselves, when sufficient reason there is not, under the power of a foe.¹⁸⁵ A weak person having made a compact with a stronger one when both are threatened by foes, should (when that common danger passes away) conduct himself heedfully and by considerations of policy. Having gained his object, the weaker of the two parties should not again repose confidence on the stronger.¹⁸⁶ One should never trust a person who does not deserve to be trusted. Nor should one repose blind confidence upon a person deserving of trust. One should always endeavour to inspire others with confidence in himself. One should not, however, himself repose confidence in foes.¹⁸⁷ For these reasons one should, under all circumstances, protect his own self. One's possessions and children and everything are so long valuable as one is alive.¹⁸⁸ In brief, the highest truth of all treatises on policy is Mistrust. For this reason, mistrust of all persons is productive of the greatest good.¹⁸⁹ However weak people may be, if they mistrust their foes, the latter, even if strong, never succeed in getting them under power.¹⁹⁰ O cat, one like myself should always guard

one's life from persons like thee. Do thou also protect thy own life from the *Chandāla* whose rage has been excited! ¹⁸¹
—While the mouse thus spake, the cat, frightened at the mention of the hunter, hastily leaving the branch of the tree, ran away with great speed.¹⁸² Having thus displayed his power of understanding, the mouse Palita also, conversant with the truths of scripture and possessed of wisdom, entered another hole.¹⁸³

"Bhishma continued,—'Even thus the mouse Palita possessed of wisdom, though weak and alone, succeeded in baffling many powerful foes.¹⁸⁴ One possessed of intelligence and learning should make peace with a powerful foe. The mouse and the cat owed their escape to their reliance upon each other's services.¹⁸⁵ I have thus pointed out to thee the course of Kshatriya duties at great length. Listen now to me in brief.¹⁸⁶ When two persons who were once engaged in hostilities make peace with each other, it is certain that each of them has it in his heart to over-reach the other.¹⁸⁷ In such a case he that is possessed of wisdom succeeds by the power of his understanding in over-reaching the other. He, on the other hand, who is destitute of wisdom suffers himself, in consequence of his heedlessness, to be over-reached by the wise.¹⁸⁸ It is necessary, therefore, that in fear one should seem to be fearless, and while really mistrusting others one should seem to be trustful. One who acts with such heedfulness never trips, or tripping, is never ruined.¹⁸⁹ When the time comes for it, one should make peace with an enemy; and when the time comes, one should wage war with even a friend. Even thus should one conduct himself, O king, as they have said that are conversant with the considerations of peace (and war).¹⁹⁰ Knowing this, O monarch, and bearing the truths of scripture in mind, one should, with all his senses about him and without heedlessness, act like a person in fear before the cause of fear actually presents itself.¹⁹¹ One should, before the cause of fear has actually come, act like a person in fear, and make peace with foes. Such

* The correct reading is *Jitakilwiskat*.—T.

fear and heedfulness lead to keenness of understanding.²⁰³ If one acts like a man in fear before the cause of fear is at hand, one is never filled with fear when that cause is actually present. From the fear, however, of a person who always acts with fearlessness, very great fear is seen to arise.^{*204}—Never cherish fear,—such counsel should never be given to any one. The person that cherishes fear moved by a consciousness of his weakness, always seeks the counsel of wise and experienced men.²⁰⁴ For these reasons, one should, when in fear, seem to be fearless, and when mistrusting (others) should seem to be trustful. One should not, in view of even the gravest acts, behave towards others with falsehood.²⁰⁵ Thus have I recited to thee, O Yudhishthira, the old story (of the mouse and the cat). Having listened to it, do thou act duly in the midst of thy friends and kinsmen.²⁰⁶ Deriving from that story a high understanding, and learning the difference between friend and foe and the proper time for war and peace, thou wilt discover means of escape when overwhelmed with danger.²⁰⁷ Making peace, at a time of common danger, with one that is powerful, thou shouldst act with proper consideration in the matter of uniting thyself with the foe (when the common danger has passed away). Indeed, having gained thy object, thou shouldst not trust the foe again.²⁰⁸ This path of policy is consistent with the aggregate of three (*viz.*, Virtue, Profit, and Pleasure), O king! Guided by this *Cruti*, do thou win prosperity by hence more protecting thy subjects.²⁰⁹ O son of Pāndu, always seek the companionship of Brāhmaṇas in all thy acts! Brāhmaṇas constitute the great source of benefit both in this world and the next.²¹⁰ They are teachers of duty and morality. They are always grateful, O puissant one! If worshipped, they are sure to do thee good. Therefore, O

* The sense, of course, is that such a man, when filled with fear, becomes unable to ward off his dangers and calamities. Prudence requires that one should fear as long as the cause of fear is not at hand. When, however, that cause has actually presented itself, one should put forth one's courage.—T.

king, thou shouldst always worship them.²¹¹ Thou wilt then, O king, duly obtain kingdom, great good, fame, achievements, and progeny in their proper order.²¹² With eyes directed to this history of peace and war between the mouse and the cat, this history couched in excellent words and capable of sharpening the intelligence, a king should always conduct himself in the midst of his foes.' "²¹³

SECTION CXXXIX.

"Yudhishthira said,—'Thou hast laid it down, O mighty one, that no trust should be placed upon foes. But how would the king maintain himself if he were not to trust anybody?¹ From trust, O king, thou hast said, great danger arises to kings. But how, O monarch, can a king, without trusting others, conquer his foes?² Kindly remove this doubt of mine. My mind has become confused, O grandsire, at what I have heard thee say on the subject of mistrust!³

"Bhishma said,—'Listen, O king, to what happened at the abode of Brahmadatta, viz., the conversation between Pujani and king Brahmadatta.⁴ There was a bird named Pujani who lived for a long time with king Brahmadatta in the inner apartments of his palace at Kāmpilya.⁵ Like the bird *Jivajivaka*, Pujani could mimic the cries of all animals. Though a bird by birth, she had great knowledge and was conversant with every truth.⁶ While living there, she brought forth an offspring of great splendour. At the very same time the king also got by his queen a son.⁷ Pujani, who was grateful for the shelter of the king's roof, used every day to go to the shores of the ocean and bring a couple of fruits for the nourishment of her own young one and the infant prince.⁸ One of those fruits she gave to her own child and the other she gave to the prince.⁹ The fruits she brought were sweet as nectar, and capable of increasing strength and energy. Every day she brought them and every day she disposed of them in the same way. The infant prince derived great strength from the fruit of Pujani's giving that he ate.¹⁰ One day the infant prince, while borne on the arms of his nurse,

saw the little offspring of Pujani. Getting down from the nurse's arms, the child ran towards the bird, and moved by childish impulse, began to play with it, relishing the sport highly.¹¹ At length, raising the bird which was of the same age with himself in his hands, the prince pressed out its young life and then came back to his nurse.¹² The dam, O king, who had been out in her search after the accustomed fruits, returning to the palace, beheld her young one lying on the ground, killed by the prince.¹³ Beholding her son deprived of life, Pujani, with tears gushing down her cheeks, and heart burning with grief, wept bitterly and said,¹⁴—Alas, nobody should live with a Kshatriya or make friends with him or take delight in any intercourse with him! When they have any object to serve, they behave with courtesy. When that object has been served, they cast off the instrument.¹⁵ The Kshatriyas do evil unto all. They should never be trusted. Even after doing an injury they always seek to soothe and assure the injured for nothing.¹⁶ I shall certainly take due vengeance, for this act of hostility, upon this cruel and ungrateful betrayer of confidence.¹⁷ He has been guilty of a triple sin in taking the life of one that was born on the same day with him and that was being reared with him in the same place, that used to eat with him, and that was dependent on him for protection!¹⁸—Having said these words unto herself, Pujani, with her talons, pierced the eyes of the prince, and deriving some comfort from that act of vengeance, once more said,¹⁹—A sinful act, perpetrated deliberately, assails the doer without any loss of time. They, on the other hand, who avenge an injury, never lose their merit by such conduct.²⁰ If the consequence of a sinful act be not seen in the perpetrator himself, they would certainly be seen, O king, in his sons or son's sons or daughter's sons!²¹—Brahmadatta, beholding his son blinded by Pujani, and regarding the act to have been a proper vengeance for what his son had done, said these words unto Pujani:²²

“Brahmadatta said,—An injury was done by us to thee. Thou hast avenged it by doing an injury in return. The account has been squared. Do not leave thy present abode. On the other hand, continue to dwell here, O Pujani!²³—

"Pujani said,—If a person having once injured another continues to reside with that other, they that are possessed of learning never applaud his conduct. Under such circumstances it is always better for the injurer to leave his old place.²⁴ One should never place one's trust upon the soothing assurances received from an injured party. The fool that trusts such assurances soon meets with destruction. Animosity is not quickly cooled.²⁵ The very sons and grandsons of persons that have injured each other meet with destruction (in consequence of the quarrel descending like an inheritance). In consequence again of such destruction of their offspring, they lose the next world also.²⁶ Amongst men that have injured one another, mistrust would be productive of happiness. One that has betrayed confidence should never be trusted in the least.²⁷ One who is not deserving of trust should not be trusted; nor should too much trust be placed upon a person deserving of trust. The danger that arises from blind confidence brings about a destruction that is complete. One should seek to inspire others with confidence in one's self. One, however, should never repose confidence on others.²⁸ The father and the mother are only the foremost of friends. The wife is merely a vessel for drawing the seeds. The son is only one's seed. The brother is a foe. The friend or companion requires to have his palms oiled if he is to remain so. One's own self it is that enjoys or suffers one's happiness or misery.²⁹ Amongst persons that have injured one another, it is not advisable that there should be (real) peace. The reason no longer exists for which I lived here.³⁰ The mind of a person who has once injured another, becomes naturally filled with mistrust, if he sees the injured person worshipping him with gifts and honors. Such conduct, especially when displayed by those that are strong, always fills the weak with alarm.³¹ A person possessed of intelligence should leave that place where he first meets with honor in order to meet only with dishonor and injury next. In spite of any subsequent honor that he might obtain from his enemy, he should behave in this way.³² I have dwelt in thy abode for a long time, all along honored by thee! A cause of enmity, however, has at last arisen. I should, therefore, leave this place without any hesitation.—³³

"Brahmadatta said,—One who does an injury in return for an injury received is never regarded as offending. Indeed, the avenger squares his account by such conduct. Therefore, O Pujani, continue to reside here without leaving this place!—"³⁴

"Pujani said,—No friendship can once more be cemented between a person that has injured and him that has inflicted an injury in return. The hearts of both cannot forget what has happened.—"³⁵

"Brahmadatta said,—It is necessary that a union should take place between an injurer and the avenger of that injury. Mutual animosity, upon such a union, has been seen to cool. No fresh injury also has followed in such cases.—"³⁶

"Pujani said,—Animosity (springing from mutual injuries) can never die. The person injured should never trust his foes, thinking—O, I have been soothed with assurances of good will!—In this world, men frequently meet with destruction in consequence of (misplaced) confidence. For this reason it is necessary that we should no longer meet each other.³⁷ They who cannot be reduced to subjection by the application of even force and sharp weapons, can be conquered by (insincere) conciliation like (wild) elephants through a (tame) she-elephant.—"³⁸

"Brahmadatta said,—From the fact of two persons residing together, even if one inflicts upon the other deadly injury, an affection arises naturally between them, as also mutual trust, as in the case of the Chāndāla and the dog.³⁹ Amongst persons that have injured one another, co-residence blunts the keenness of animosity. Indeed, that animosity does not last long, but disappears quickly like water poured upon the leaf of a lotus.—"⁴⁰

"Pujani said,—Hostility springs from five causes. Persons possessed of learning know it. Those five causes are woman, land, harsh words, natural incompatibility, and injury.⁴¹

* The hostility between Krishna and Cīcūpāla was due to the first of these causes; that between the Kurus and the Pāndavas to the second; that between Drona and Drupada to the third; that between the cat and the mouse to the fourth; and that between the bird and the king (in the present story) to the fifth.—T.

When the person with whom hostility occurs happens to be a man of liberality, he should never be slain, particularly by a Kshatriya, openly or by covert means. In such a case, the man's fault should be properly weighed.⁴⁴ When hostility has arisen with even a friend, no further confidence should be reposed upon him. Feelings of animosity lie hid like fire in wood.⁴⁵ Like the *Aurvya* fire within the waters of the ocean, the fire of animosity can never be extinguished by gifts of wealth, by display of prowess, by conciliation, or by scriptural learning.⁴⁶ The fire of animosity, once ignited,—the result of an injury once inflicted,—is never extinguished, O king, without consuming out the right one of the parties.⁴⁷ One, having injured a person, should never trust him again as one's friend, even though one might have (after the infliction of the injury) worshipped him with wealth and honors. The fact of the injury inflicted fills the injurer with fear.⁴⁸ I never injured thee. Thou also didst never do me an injury. For this reason I dwelt in thy abode. All that is changed, and at present I cannot trust thee!—⁴⁹

"Brahmadatta said,—It is Time that does every act. Acts are of diverse kinds, and all of them proceed from Time. Who therefore, injures whom?⁵⁰ Birth and Death happen in the same way. Creatures act (i. e., take birth and live) in consequence of Time, and it is in consequence also of Time that they cease to live.⁵¹ Some are seen to die at once. Some die one at a time. Some are seen to live for long periods. Like fire consuming the fuel it gets, Time consumes all creatures.⁵² O blessed lady, I am, therefore, not the cause of your sorrow, nor art thou the cause of mine. It is Time that always ordains the weal and woe of embodied creatures.⁵³ Do thou then continue to dwell here according to thy pleasure, with affection for me and without fear of

* The sense seems to be that the act which has led to the hostility should be calmly considered by the enemy before he gives way to wrath.—T.

+ If it is Time that does all acts, there can be no individual responsibility.—T.

any injury from me. What thou hast done has been forgiven by me. Do thou also forgive me, O Pujani!—⁶²

“Pujani said,—If Time, according to thee, be the cause of all acts, then of course nobody can cherish feelings of animosity towards anybody on Earth. I ask, however, why do friends and kinsmen, when friends and kinsmen are slain, seek to avenge the latter?⁶³ Why also did the gods and the *Asuras* in days of yore smite each other in battle? If it is Time that causes weal and woe and birth and death,⁶⁴ why do physicians then seek to administer medicines to the sick? If it is Time that is moulding everything, what need is there of medicines?⁶⁵ Why do people, deprived of their senses by grief, indulge in such delirious rhapsodies? If Time, according to thee, be the cause of acts, how can religious merit be acquired by persons performing religious acts?⁶⁶ Thy son killed my child. I have injured him for that. I have by that act, O king, become liable to be slain by thee.⁶⁷ Moved by grief for my son, I have done this injury to thy son. Listen now to the reason why I have become liable to be killed by thee.⁶⁸ Men wish for birds either to kill them for food or to keep them in cages for sport. There is no third reason besides such slaughter or immurement for which men would seek individuals of our species.⁶⁹ Birds, again, from fear of being either killed or immured by men, seek safety in flight. Persons conversant with the Vedas have said that death and immurement are both painful.⁷⁰ Life is dear unto all. All creatures are made miserable by grief and pain. All creatures wish for happiness.⁷¹ Misery arises from various sources. Decrepitude, O Brahmadatta, is misery. The loss of wealth is misery. The adjacency of anything disagreeable or evil is misery. Separation or dissociation from friends and agreeable objects is misery.⁷² Misery arises from death and immurement. Misery arises from causes connected with women and from other natural causes. The misery that arises from the death of children alters and afflicts all creatures very greatly.⁷³ Some foolish persons say that there is no misery in other's misery.*

* I. e., they are indifferent to other people's sorrow.—T.

Only he who has not felt any misery himself can say so in the midst of men.⁶⁴ He, however, that has felt sorrow and misery, would never venture to say so. One that has felt the pangs of every kind of misery feels the misery of others as one's own.⁶⁵ What I have done to thee, O king, and what thou hast done to me, cannot be washed away by even a hundred years.⁶⁶ After what we have done to each other, there cannot be a reconciliation. As often as thou wilt happen to think of thy son, thy animosity towards me will become fresh.⁶⁷ If a person after avenging an injury, desires to make peace with the injured, the parties cannot be properly reunited even like the fragments of an earthen vessel.⁶⁸ Men conversant with scriptures have laid it down that trust never produces happiness. Uçanas himself sang two verses unto Prahlāda in days of old.⁶⁹ He who trusts the words, true or false, of a foe, meets with destruction like a seeker of honey, in a pit covered with dry grass.^{70*} Animosities are seen to survive the very death of enemies, for persons are not wanting to speak of the quarrels of deceased sires before their surviving children.⁷¹ Kings extinguish animosities by having recourse to conciliation but, when the opportunity comes, break their foes into pieces like earthen jars full of water dashed upon stone.⁷² If the king does injury to any one, he should never trust him again. By trusting a person who has been injured, one has to suffer great misery.—⁷³

“Brahmadatta said,—No man can obtain the fruition of any object by withholding his trust (from others). By cherishing fear one always is obliged to live as a dead person.—⁷⁴

“Pujani said,—He whose feet have become sore, certainly meets with a fall if he seeks to move, move he may howsoever cautiously.⁷⁵ A man who has got sore eyes, by opening them against the wind, finds them exceedingly pained by the wind.⁷⁶ He who, without knowing his own strength, sets foot on a wicked path and persists in walking along it, soon

* Honey-seekers direct their steps through hill and dale by marking intently the course of the flight of bees. Hence they meet with frequent falls.—T.

loses his very life as the consequence.⁵⁰ The man who, destitute of exertion, tills his land, disregarding the season of rain, never succeeds in obtaining a harvest.⁵¹ He, who takes every day food that is nutritive, be it bitter or astringent or palatable or sweet, enjoys a long life.⁵² He, on the other hand, who disregards wholesome food and takes that which is injurious without an eye to consequences, soon meets with death.⁵³ Destiny and Exertion exist, depending upon each other. They that are of high souls achieve good and great feats, while eunuchs only pay court to Destiny.⁵⁴ Be it harsh or be it mild, an act that is beneficial should be done. The unfortunate man of inaction, however, is always overwhelmed by all sorts of calamity.⁵⁵ Therefore, abandoning everything else, one should put forth his energy. Indeed, disregarding everything, men should do what is productive of good to themselves.⁵⁶ Knowledge, courage, cleverness, strength, and patience, are said to be one's natural friends. They that are possessed of wisdom pass their lives in this world with the aid of those five.⁵⁷ Houses, precious metals, land, wife, and friends,—these are said by the learned to be secondary sources of good. A man may obtain them everywhere.⁵⁸ A person possessed of wisdom may be delighted everywhere. Such a man shines everywhere. He never inspires anybody with fear. If sought to be frightened, he never yields to fear himself.⁵⁹ The wealth, however little, that is possessed at any time by an intelligent man is certain to increase. Such a man does every act with cleverness. In consequence of self-restraint, he succeeds in winning great fame.⁶⁰ Home-keeping men of little understandings have to put up with termagant wives that eat up their flesh like the progeny of a crab eating up their dam.⁶¹ There are men who through loss of understanding become very cheerless at the prospect of leaving home. They say unto themselves, —These are our friends! This is our country! Alas, how shall we leave these?⁶²—One should certainly leave the country of one's birth if it be afflicted by plague or famine. One should live in one's own country, respected by all, or repair to a foreign country for living there.⁶³ I shall, for

this reason, repair to some other region. I do not venture to live any longer in this place, for I have done a great wrong to thy child, O king !⁹¹ One should from a distance abandon a bad wife, a bad son, a bad king, a bad friend, a bad alliance, and a bad country.⁹² One should not place any trust on a bad son. What joy can one have in a bad wife? There can not be any happiness in a bad kingdom. In a bad country one cannot hope to obtain a livelihood.⁹³ There can be no lasting companionship with a bad friend whose attachment is very uncertain. In a bad alliance, when there is no necessity for it, there is disgrace.⁹⁴ She, indeed, is a wife who speaks only what is agreeable. He is a son who makes the sire happy. He is a friend in whom one can trust. That, indeed, is one's country where one earns one's living.⁹⁵ He is a king of strict rule who does not oppress, who cherishes the poor and in whose territories there is no fear.⁹⁶ Wife, country, friends, son, kinsmen, and relatives, all these one can have if the king happens to be possessed of accomplishments and virtuous eyes.⁹⁷ If the king happens to be sinful, his subjects, in consequence of his oppressions, meet with destruction. The king is the root of one's triple aggregate (i. e., Virtue, Wealth, and Pleasure). He should protect his subjects with heedfulness.⁹⁸ Taking from his subjects a sixth share of their wealth, he should protect them all. That king who does not protect his subjects is truly a thief.⁹⁹ That king who, after giving assurances of protection, does not, from rapacity, fulfil them,—that ruler of sinful soul,—takes upon himself the sins of all his subjects and ultimately sinks into hell.¹⁰⁰ That king, on the other hand, who, having given assurances of protection, fulfils them, comes to be regarded as a universal benefactor in consequence of his protecting all his subjects.¹⁰¹ The lord of all creatures, viz., Manu, has said that the king has seven attributes: he is mother, father, preceptor, protector, fire, Vaiçravana, and Yama.¹⁰² The king by behaving with compassion towards his people is called their father. The subject that behaves falsely towards him takes birth in his next life as an animal or a bird.¹⁰³ By doing good to them and by cherishing the poor, the king

becomes a mother unto his people. By scorching the wicked he comes to be regarded as fire, and by restraining the sinful he comes to be called Yama.¹⁰⁴ By making gifts of wealth unto those that are dear to him, the king comes to be regarded as Kuvera, the grantor of wishes. By giving instruction in morality and virtue, he becomes a preceptor, and by exercising the duty of protection he becomes the protector.¹⁰⁵ That king who delights the people of his cities and provinces by means of his accomplishments, is never divested of his kingdom in consequence of such observance of duty.¹⁰⁶ That king who knows how to honor his subjects never suffers misery either here or hereafter.¹⁰⁷ That king whose subjects are always filled with anxiety or overburdened with taxes, and overwhelmed by evils of every kind, meets with defeat at the hands of his enemies.¹⁰⁸ That king, on the other hand, whose subjects grow like a large lotus in a lake, succeeds in obtaining every reward here and at last meets with honor in heaven.¹⁰⁹ Hostility with a person that is powerful is, O king, never applauded. That king who has incurred the hostility of one more powerful than himself, loses both kingdom and happiness.—¹¹⁰

“Bhishma continued,—‘The bird, having said these words, O monarch, unto king Brahmadatta, took the king’s leave and proceeded to the region she chose.¹¹¹ I have thus recited to thee, O foremost of kings, the discourse between Brahmadatta and Pujani. What else dost thou wish to hear?’”¹¹²

SECTION CXL.

“Yudhishtira said,—‘When both righteousness and men, O Bhārata, decay in consequence of the gradual lapse of Yuga, and when the world becomes afflicted by robbers, how, O Grandsire, should a king then behave?’”¹¹³

“Bhishma said,—‘I shall tell thee, O Bhārata, the policy the king should pursue amid such distress. I shall tell thee

* Everything decays in course of time. Vide the characteristics of the different Yugas, ante.—T.

how he should bear himself at such a time, casting off compassion.³ In this connection is cited the old story of the discourse between Bhāradwāja and king Catrunjaya.⁴ There was a king name Catrunjaya among the Sauviras. He was a great car-warrior. Repairing to Bhāradwāja, he asked the *Rishi* about the truths of the science of Profit, saying,—How can an unacquired object be acquired? How, again, when acquired, can it be increased? How also, when increased, can it be protected? And how, when protected, should it be used?⁵—Thus questioned about the truths of the science of Profit, the regenerate *Rishi* said the following words fraught with excellent reason unto that ruler for explaining those truths.⁶

"The *Rishi* said,—The king should always stay with the rod of chastisement uplifted in his hand. He should always display his prowess. Himself without laches, he should mark the laches of his foes. Indeed, his eye should ever be used for that purpose.⁷ At the sight of a king who has the rod of chastisement ever uplifted in his hand, every one is struck with fear. For this reason, the king should rule all creatures with the rod of chastisement.⁸ Men possessed of learning and knowledge of truth applaud Chastisement. Hence, of the four requisites of rule, viz., Conciliation, Gift, Disunion, and Chastisement, Chastisement is said to be the foremost.⁹ When the foundations of that which serves for a refuge are cut away, all the refugees perish. When the roots of a tree are cut away, how would the branches live?¹⁰ A king possessed of wisdom should cut away the very roots of his foe. He should then win over and bring under his sway the allies and partisans of that foe.¹¹ When calamities overtake the king, he should, without losing time, counsel wisely, display his prowess properly, fight with ability, and even retreat with wisdom.¹² In speech only should the king exhibit his humility, but at heart he should be sharp as a razor. He should cast off lust and wrath, and speak sweetly and mildly.¹³ When the occasion comes for intercourse with an enemy, a king possessed of foresight should make peace, without reposing blind trust on him. When the business is over, ha-

should quickly turn away from the new ally.¹⁴ One should conciliate a foe with sweet assurances as if he were a friend. One, however, should always stand in fear of that foe as of a room within which there is a snake.¹⁵ He whose understanding is to be dominated by thee (with the aid of thine) should be assured by references to the past. He who is of wicked understanding should be assured by promises of future good.¹⁶ The person, however, that is possessed of wisdom, should be assured by present services. The person who is desirous of achieving prosperity should join hands, swear, use sweet words, worship by bending down his head, and shed tears.¹⁷ One should bear one's foe on one's shoulders as long as time is unfavorable. When, however, the opportunity has come, one should break him into fragments like an earthen jar on a stone.¹⁸ It is better, O monarch, that a king should blaze up for a moment like charcoal of ebony-wood than that he should smoulder and smoke like chaff for many years.¹⁹ A man who has many purposes to serve should not scruple to deal with even an ungrateful person. If successful, one can enjoy happiness. If unsuccessful, one loses esteem.²⁰ Therefore, in accomplishing the acts of such persons, one should, without accomplishing them completely, always keep something unfinished. A king should do what is for his good, imitating a *kokila*, a boar, the mountains of Meru, an empty chamber, an actor, and a devoted friend.^{†21} The king should frequently, with heedful application, repair to the houses of his foes, and even if calamities befall them, ask them about their good.²² They that are idle never win affluence; nor they that are destitute of manliness and exertion; nor they that are

* I. e., do any of these or all as occasion may require.—T.

† The king should imitate the *kokila* by causing his own friends or subjects to be maintained by others; he should imitate the boar by tearing up his foes by their very roots; he should imitate the mountains of Meru by presenting such a front that nobody may transgress him; he should imitate an empty chamber by keeping room enough for storing acquisitions; he should imitate the actor by assuming different guises; and lastly, he should imitate a devoted friend in attending to the interests of his loving subjects.—T.

stained by vanity ; nor they that fear unpopularity ; nor they that are always procrastinating.²² The king should act in such a way that his foe may not succeed in detecting his laches. He should, however, himself mark the laches of his foes. He should imitate the tortoise which conceals its limbs. Indeed, he should always conceal his own holes.²³ He should think of all matters connected with finance like a crane.* He should put forth his prowess like a lion. He should lie in wait like a wolf and fall upon and pierce his foes like a shaft.²⁴ Drink, dice, women, hunting, and music,—these he should enjoy judiciously. Addiction to these is productive of evil.²⁵ He should make his bow of bamboos ; he should sleep like the deer ; he should be blind when it is necessary that he should be so, or he should even be deaf when it is necessary to be deaf.²⁶ The king possessed of wisdom should put forth his prowess, regardless of time and place. If these are not favorable, prowess becomes futile.²⁷ Marking timeliness and untimeliness, reflecting upon his own strength and weakness, and improving his own strength by comparing it with that of the enemy, the king should address himself to action.²⁸ That king who does not crush a foe reduced to subjection by military force, provides for his own death like the crab when she conceives.²⁹ The king should put forth blossoms but not fruits. Putting forth fruits he should be difficult of climbing ; and though unripe he should seem to be ripe. If he conducts himself in such a way then would he succeed in upholding himself against all foes.³⁰ The king should first strengthen the hopes (of those that approach him as suitors). He should then put obstacles in the way of the fulfilment of those hopes. He should say that those obstacles are merely due to occasion. He should next represent that those occasions are really the results of grave causes.³¹ As long as the cause of fear does not actually come, the king should make all his arrangements like a person inspired with fear. When, however, the cause of fear comes upon

* The crane sits patiently by the water side for hours together in expectation of fish.—T.

him, he should smite fearlessly.³³ No man can reap good without incurring danger. If, again, he succeeds in preserving his life amid danger, he is sure to earn great benefits.³⁴ A king should ascertain all future dangers; when they are present, he should conquer them; and lest they grow again, he should, even after conquering them, think them to be unconquered.³⁵ The abandonment of present happiness and the pursuit of that which is future, is never the policy of a person possessed of intelligence.³⁶ That king who having made peace with a foe sleeps happily in trustfulness is like a man who sleeping on the top of a tree awakes after a fall.³⁷ When one falls into distress, one should raise one's self by any means in one's power, mild or stern; and after such rise, when competent, one should practise righteousness.³⁸ The king should always honor the foes of his foes. He should take his own spies as agents employed by his foes.³⁹ The king should see that his own spies are not recognised by his foe. He should make spies of atheists and ascetics and send them to the territories of his enemies.⁴⁰ Sinful thieves, who offend against the laws of righteousness and who are thorns in the side of every person, enter gardens and places of amusement and houses set up for giving drinking water to thirsty travellers and public seruis and drinking spots and houses of ill fame and *tirthas* and public assemblies. These should be recognised and arrested and put down.⁴¹⁻⁴² The king should not trust the person that does not deserve to be trusted; nor should he trust too much the person that is deserving of trust. Danger springs from trust. Trust should never be placed without previous examination.⁴³ Having by plausible reasons inspired confidence in the enemy, the king should smite him when he makes a false step.⁴⁴ The king should fear him from whom there is no fear; he should also always fear them that should be feared. Fear that arises from an unfearred one may lead to total extermination.⁴⁵ By attention (to the acquisition of religious merit), by taciturnity, by the reddish garb of ascetics, and wearing matted locks and skins, one

* I. e., if he passes safely through the danger.—T.

should inspire confidence in one's foe, and then (when the opportunity comes) one should jump upon him like the wolf.⁵⁴ A king desirous of prosperity should not scruple to slay son or brother or father or friend, if any of these seek to thwart his objects.⁵⁵ The very preceptor, if he happens to be arrogant, ignorant of what should be done and what should not, and a treader of unrighteous paths, deserves to be restrained by chastisement.⁵⁶ Even as certain insects of sharp stings cut off all the flowers and fruits of the trees on which they sit, the king should, after having inspired confidence in his foe by honors and salutations and gifts, turn against him and shear him of everything.⁵⁷ Without piercing the very vitals of others, without accomplishing many stern deeds, without slaughtering living creatures after the manner of the fisherman, one cannot acquire great prosperity.⁵⁸ There is no separate species of creatures called foes or friends. Persons become friends or foes according to the force of circumstances.⁵⁹ The king should never allow his foe to escape even if the foe should indulge piteous lamentations. He should never be moved by these; on the other hand, it is his duty to destroy the person that has done him an injury.⁶⁰ A king desirous of prosperity should take care to attach to himself as many men as he can, and to do them good. In behaving towards his subjects he should always be free from malice. He should also, with great care, punish and check the wicked and disaffected.⁶¹ When he intends to take wealth, he should say what is agreeable. Having taken wealth, he should say similar things. Having struck off one's head with his sword, he should grieve and shed tears.⁶² A king desirous of prosperity should draw others unto himself by means of sweet words, honors, and gifts. Even thus should he bind men unto his service.⁶³ The king should never engage in fruitless disputes. He should never cross a river with the aid only of his two arms. To eat cow-horns is fruitless and never invigorating. By eating them one's teeth are broken while the taste is not gratified.⁶⁴ The triple aggregate has three disadvantages with three inseparable adjuncts. Carefully considering those adjuncts, the disadvantages should be

avoided.*⁶⁷ The unpaid balance of a debt, the unquenched remnant of a fire, and the unslain remnant of foes, repeatedly grow and increase. Therefore, all those should be completely extinguished and exterminated.⁶⁸ Debt, which always grows, is certain to remain unless wholly extinguished. The same is the case with defeated foes and neglected maladies. These always produce great fear. (One should, therefore, always eradicate them).⁶⁹ Every act should be done thoroughly. One should be always heedful. Such a minute thing as a thorn, if extracted badly, leads to obstinate gangrene.⁷⁰ By slaughtering its population, by tearing up its roads and otherwise injuring them, and by burning and pulling down its houses, a king should destroy a hostile kingdom.⁷¹ A king should be far-sighted like the vulture, motionless like a crane, vigilant like a dog, valiant like a lion, fearful like a crow, and penetrate the territories of his foes like a snake with ease and without anxiety.⁷² A king should win over a hero by joining his palms, a coward by inspiring him with fear, and a covetous man by gifts of wealth while with an equal he should wage war.⁷³ He should be mindful of producing disunion among the leaders of sects and of conciliating those that are dear to him. He should protect his ministers from disunion and destructions.⁷⁴ If the king becomes mild, the people disregard him. If he becomes stern, the people feel it as an affliction. The rule is that he should be stern when the occasion requires sternness, and mild when the occasion requires mildness.⁷⁵ By mildness should the mild be cut. By mildness one may destroy that which is fierce. There is

* The triple aggregate consists of Virtue, Wealth, and Pleasure. The disadvantages all arise from an injudicious pursuit of each. Virtue stands as an impediment in the way of Wealth ; Wealth stands in the way of Virtue ; and Pleasure stands in the way of both. The inseparable adjuncts of the three, in the case of the vulgar, are that Virtue is practised as a means of Wealth ; Wealth is sought as a means of Pleasure ; and Pleasure is sought for gratifying the sensea. In the case of the truly wise, those adjuncts are purity of the soul as the end of Virtue; performance of sacrifices as the end of Wealth; and upholding of the body as the end of Pleasure.—T.

nothing that mildness cannot effect. For this reason, mildness is said to be sharper than fierceness.⁶⁶ That king who becomes mild when the occasion requires mildness and who becomes stern when sternness is required, succeeds in accomplishing all his objects, and in putting down his foes.⁶⁷ Having incurred the animosity of a person possessed of knowledge and wisdom, one should not draw comfort from the conviction that one is at a distance (from one's foe). Far-reaching are the arms of an intelligent man by which he injures when injured.⁶⁸ That should not be sought to be crossed which is really uncrossable. That should not be snatched from the foe which the foe would be able to recover. One should not seek to dig at all if by digging one would not succeed in getting at the root of the thing for which one digs. One should never strike him whose head one would not cut off.⁶⁹ A king should not always act in this way. This course of conduct that I have laid down should be pursued only in seasons of distress. Inspired by the motive of doing thee good I have said this for instructing thee as to how thou shouldst bear thyself when assailed by foes.—⁷⁰

"Bhishma continued,—The ruler of the kingdom of the Sauviras, hearing these words spoken by that Brāhmaṇa inspired with the desire of doing him good, obeyed those instructions cheerfully and obtained with his kinsmen and friends blazing prosperity."⁷¹

SECTION CXLI.

"Yudhishtira said,—'When high righteousness suffers decay and is transgressed by all, when unrighteousness becomes righteousness, and righteousness assumes the form of its reverse,¹ when all wholesome restraints disappear, and all truths in respect of righteousness are disturbed and confounded, when people are oppressed by kings and robbers,² when men of all the four modes of life become stupified in respect of their duties, and all acts lose their merit, when men see cause of fear on every direction in consequence of lust and covetousness and folly,³ when all creatures cease to trust one

another, when they slay one another by deceitful means and deceive one another in their mutual dealings;⁸ when houses are burnt down throughout the country, when the Brāhmaṇas become exceedingly afflicted, when the clouds do not pour a drop of rain, when every one's hand is turned against every one's neighbour,⁹ when all the necessaries of life fall under the power of robbers, when, indeed, such a season of terrible distress sets in, by what means should a Brāhmaṇa live¹⁰ who is unwilling to cast off compassion and his children? How, indeed, should a Brāhmaṇa maintain himself at such a time? Tell me this, O grandsire!¹¹ How also should the king live at such a time when sinfulness overtakes the world? How, O scorcher of foes, should the king live so that he might not fall away from both righteousness and profit?"

"Bhishma said,—'O mighty-armed one, the peace and prosperity of subjects,* sufficiency and seasonableness of rain, disease, death, and other fears, are all dependent on the king.¹² I have no doubt also in this, O bull of Bharata's race, that *Krita*, *Treta*, *Dwāpara*, and *Kali*, as regards their setting in, are all dependent on the king's conduct.¹³ When such a season of misery as has been described by thee sets in, the righteous should support life by the aid of judgment.¹⁴ In this connection is cited the old story of the discourse between Viçvāmitra and the Chāndāla in a hamlet inhabited by Chāndālas.¹⁵ Towards the end of *Tretā* and the beginning of *Dwāpara*, a frightful drought occurred, extending for twelve years, in consequence of what the gods had ordained.¹⁶ At that time which was the end of *Tretā* and the commencement of *Dwāpara*, when the period came for many creatures superannuated by age to lay down their lives,¹⁷ the thousand-eyed deity of heaven poured no rain. The planet Vrihaspati

* Literally, 'preservation of what has been got, and acquisition of what is desired.'—T.

[†] These depend on the king, i. e., if the king happen to be good, prosperity, &c., are seen. On the other hand, if the king become oppressive and sinful, prosperity disappears, and every kind of evil sets in.—T.

began to move in a retrograde course, and Soma, abandoning his own orbit, receded towards the south.¹⁶ Not even could a dew-drop be seen, what need then be said of clouds gathering together? The rivers all shrank into narrow streamlets.¹⁷ Everywhere lakes and wells and springs disappeared and lost their beauty in consequence of that order of things which the gods brought about.¹⁸ Water having become scarce, the places set up by charity for its distribution became desolate.* The Brāhmaṇas abstained from sacrifices and recitation of the Vedas. They no longer uttered *Vashats* and performed other propitiatory rites.¹⁹ Agriculture and keep of cattle were given up. Markets and shops were abandoned. Stakes for tethering sacrificial animals disappeared. People no longer collected diverse kinds of articles for sacrifices. All festivals and amusements perished.²⁰ Everywhere heaps of bones were visible and every place resounded with the shrill cries and yells of fierce creatures.† The cities and towns of the Earth became empty of inhabitants. Villages and hamlets were burnt down.²¹ Some afflicted by robbers, some by weapons, and some by bad kings, and in fear of one another, began to fly away.²² Temples and places of worship became desolate. They that were aged were forcibly turned out of their houses. Kine and goats and sheep and buffaloes fought (for food) and perished in large numbers. The Brāhmaṇas began to die on all sides.²³ Protection was at an end. Herbs and plants were dried up. The Earth became shorn of all her beauty and exceedingly awful like the trees in a crematorium.²⁴ In that period of terror, when righteousness was nowhere, O Yudhiṣṭhīra, men in hunger lost their senses and began to eat one another.²⁵ The very *Rishis*, giving up their vows and aban-

* In India, during the hot months, charitable persons set up shady thatches by the sides of streets for the distribution of cool water and raw sugar and oat soaked in water. Among any of the principal roads running through the country, one may, during the hot months, still see hundreds of such institutions affording real relief to thirsty travellers.—T.

† Such as *Rakshasas* and *Pipācas* and carnivorous birds and beasts.—T.

dening their fires and deities, and deserting their retreats in the woods, began to wander hither and thither (in search of food).²⁶ The holy and great *Rishi* Viçwāmitra, possessed of great intelligence, wandered homeless and afflicted with hunger.²⁷ Leaving his wife and son in some place of shelter, the *Rishi* wandered, fireless* and homeless, and regardless of food clean and unclean.²⁷ One day he came upon a hamlet, in the midst of a forest, inhabited by cruel hunters addicted to the slaughter of living creatures.²⁸ The little hamlet abounded with broken jars and pots made of earth. Dog-skins were spread here and there. Bones and skulls, gathered in heaps, of boars and asses, lay in different places.²⁹ Cloths stript from the dead lay here and there, and the huts were adorned with garlands of used up flowers.† Many of the habitations again were embellished with sloughs cast off by snakes.³⁰ The place resounded with the loud crowing of cocks and hens and the dissonant bray of asses. Here and there the inhabitants disputed with one another, uttering harsh words in shrill voices.³¹ Here and there were temples of gods bearing devices of owls and other birds. Resounding with the tinkle of iron bells, the hamlet abounded with canine packs standing or lying on every side.³² The great *Rishi* Viçwāmitra, urged by pangs of hunger and engaged in search after food, entered that hamlet and endeavoured his best to find something to eat.³³ Though the son of Kuçika begged repeatedly, yet he failed to obtain any meat or rice or fruit or root or any other kind of food.³⁴ He then, exclaiming—Alas, great is the distress that has overtaken me!—fell down from weakness in that hamlet of the Chāndālas.³⁵ The sage began to reflect, saying to himself.—What is best for me to do now?—Indeed, O best of kings, the thought that occupied him was of the means by which he could avoid immediate death.³⁶ He beheld, O king, a large piece of flesh, of a dog that had recently been slain with a weapon, spread on the floor of a Chāndāla's hut.³⁷ The sage reflected and arrived at

* Abandoning his *Homa* fire.—T.

† I. e., flowers already offered to the deities.—T.

the conclusion that he should steal that meat. And he said unto himself,—I have no means now of sustaining life.³⁸ Theft is allowable in a season of distress for even an eminent person. It will not detract from his glory. Even a Brāhmaṇa for saving his life may do it. This is certain.³⁹ In the first place one should steal from a low person. Failing such a person one may steal from one's equal. Failing an equal, one may steal from even an eminent and righteous man.⁴⁰ I shall then, at this time when my life itself is ebbing away, steal this meat. I do not see demerit in such theft. I shall, therefore, rob this haunch of dog's meat.⁴¹—Having formed this resolution, the great sage Viçvāmitra laid himself down for sleep in that place where the Chāndāla was.⁴² Seeing sometime after that the night had advanced and that the whole Chāndāla hamlet had fallen asleep, the holy Viçvāmitra, quietly rising up, entered that hut.⁴³ The Chāndāla who owned it, with eyes covered with pleghm, was lying like one asleep. Of disagreeable visage, he said these harsh words in a broken and dissonant voice.⁴⁴

"The Chāndāla said,—Who is there, engaged in undoing the latch? The whole Chāndāla hamlet is asleep. I, however, am awake and not asleep. Whoever thou art, thou art about to be slain!—These were the harsh words that greeted the sage's ears.⁴⁵ Filled with fear, his face crimson with the blushes of shame, and his heart agitated by anxiety caused by that act of theft which he had attempted, he answered, saying,⁴⁶—O thou that art blest with a long life, I am Viçvāmitra! I have come here in the pangs of hunger. O thou of righteous understanding, do not slay me, if thy sight be clear!⁴⁷—Hearing these words of that great *Rishi* of cleansed soul, the Chāndāla rose up in terror from his bed and approached the sage.⁴⁸ Joining his palms from reverence and with eyes bathed in tears, he addressed Kuçika's son, saying,—What do you seek here in the night, O Brāhmaṇa!⁴⁹—Conciliating the Chāndāla, Viçvāmitra said,—I am exceedingly hungry and about to die of starvation! I desire to take away that haunch of dog's meat!⁵⁰ Being hungry I have become sinful. One solicitous of food has no shame. It is

hunger that is urging me to this misdeed. It is for this that I desire to take away that haunch of dog's meat!⁵¹ My life-breaths are languishing. Hunger has destroyed my Vedic lore. I am weak and have lost my senses. I have no scruple about clean or unclean food. Although I know that it is sinful still I wish to take away that haunch of dog's meat.⁵² After I had failed to obtain any alms, having wandered from house to house in this your hamlet, I set my heart upon this sinful act of taking away this haunch of dog's meet.⁵³ Fire is the mouth of the gods. He is also their priest. He should, therefore, take nothing save things that are pure and clean. At times, however, that great god becomes a consumer of everything. Know that I have now become even like him in that respect!⁵⁴—Hearing these words of the great *Rishi*, the Chāndāla answered him, saying,—Listen to me! Having heard the words of truth that I say, act in such a way that thy religious merit may not perish!⁵⁵ Hear, O regenerate *Rishi*, what I say unto thee about thy duty. The wise say that a dog is less clean than a jackal. The haunch, again, of a dog is a much worse part than other parts of his body.⁵⁶ This was not wisely resolved by thee, therefore, O great *Rishi*, this act that is inconsistent with righteousness, this theft of what belongs to a Chāndāla, this theft, besides, of food that is unclean!⁵⁷ Blessed be thou, do thou look for some other means for preserving thy life. O great sage, let not thy penances suffer destruction in consequence of this thy strong desire for dog's meat!⁵⁸ Knowing as thou dost the duties laid down in the scriptures, thou shouldst not do an act whose consequence is a confusion of duties.* Do not cast off righteousness, for thou art the foremost of all persons observant of righteousness!⁵⁹—Thus addressed, O king, the great *Rishi* Viçvāmitra, afflicted by hunger, O bull of Bharata's race, once more said,⁶⁰—A long time has passed away without my having taken any food! I do not see any means again for

* No one of the three regenerate orders should take dog's meat. If thou takest such meat, where would then the distinction be between persons of those orders and men like Chāndālas?—T.

preserving my life !⁶¹ One should, when one is dying, preserve one's life by any means in one's power without judging of their character. Afterwards, when competent, one should seek the acquisition of merit.⁶² The Kshatriyas should observe the practices of Indra. It is the duty of the Brāhmaṇas to behave like Agni. The Vedas are fire. They constitute my strength. I shall, therefore, eat even this unclean food for appeasing my hunger !⁶³ That by which life may be preserved should certainly be accomplished without scruple. Life is better than death. Living, one may acquire virtue.⁶⁴ Sollicitous of preserving my life, I desire, with the full exercise of my understanding, to eat this unclean food. Let me receive thy permission.⁶⁵ Continuing to live I shall seek the acquisition of virtue and shall destroy by penances and by knowledge the calamities consequent on my present conduct, like the luminaries of the firmament destroying even the thickest gloom !⁶⁶—

“The Chāndāla said,—By eating this food one (like thee) cannot obtain long life. Nor can one (like thee) obtain strength (from such food), nor that gratification which ambrosia offers. Do thou seek for some other kind of alms ! Let not thy heart incline towards eating dog's meat ! The dog is containly an unclean food to members of the regenerate classes !⁶⁷—

“Viçvāmitra said,—Any other kind of meat is not be easily had during a famine like this ! Besides, O Chāndāla, I have no wealth (wherewith to buy food)! I am exceedingly hungry. I cannot move any longer ! I am utterly hopeless ! I think that all the six kinds of taste are to be found in that piece of dog's meat !⁶⁸—

“The Chāndāla said,—Only the five kinds of five-clawed animals are clean food for Brāhmaṇas and Kshatriyas and Vaiçyas, as laid down in the scriptures. Do not set thy heart upon what is unclean (for thee).”—

“Viçvāmitra said,—The great Rishi Agastya, while hungry, ate up the Asura named Vātāpi. I am fallen into distress. I am hungry. I shall, therefore, eat that haunch of dog's meat.—

"The Chāndāla said,—Do thou seek some other alms. It behoves thee not to do such a thing! Verily, such an act should never be done by thee. If, however, it pleases thee, thou mayst take away this piece of dog's meat!"—

"Viçvāmitra said,—They that are called good are authorities in matters of duty. I am following their example. I now regard this dog's haunch to be better food than anything that is highly pure!"—

"The Chāndāla said,—That which is the act of an unrighteous person can never be regarded as an eternal practice. That which is an improper act can never be a proper one. Do not commit a sinful act by deception!"—

"Viçvāmitra said,—A man who is a *Rishi* cannot do what is sinful.* In the present case, deer and dog, I think, are the same (both being animals). I shall, therefore, eat this dog's haunch!"—

"The Chāndāla said,—Solicited by the Brāhmaṇas, the *Rishi* (Agastya) did that act. Under the circumstances it could not be a sin. That is righteousness in which there is no sin. Besides, the Brāhmaṇas, who are the preceptors of the three other orders, should be protected and preserved by every means!"—

"Viçvāmitra said,—I am a Brāhmaṇa. This my body is a friend of mine. It is very dear to me and is worthy of the highest reverence from me! It is from the desire of sustaining the body that the wish is entertained by me of taking away that dog's haunch. So eager have I become that I have no longer any fear of thee and thy fierce brethren!"—

"The Chāndāla said,—Men lay down their lives but they still do not set their hearts on food that is unclean. They obtain the fruition of all their wishes even in this world by conquering hunger. Do thou also conquer thy hunger and obtain those rewards!"—

"Viçvāmitra said,—As regards myself, I am observant of rigid vows and my heart is set on peace. For preserving the root of all religious merit, I shall eat food that is unclean.⁷⁶ It

* Agastya was a *Rishi*. He could not do what was sinful.—T.

is evident that such an act would be regarded as righteous in a person of cleansed soul. To a person, however, of uncleansed soul the eating of dog's flesh would appear sinful. Even if the conclusion to which I have arrived be wrong (and if I eat this dog's meat) I shall not, for that act, become one like thee !⁵⁰—

“ The Chāndāla said,—It is my settled conclusion that I shkould endeavour my best to restrain thee from this sin. A Brāhmaṇa by doing a wicked act falls off from his high state. It is for this that I am reproving thee !⁵¹—

“ Viçvāmitra said,—Kine continue to drink, regardless of the croaking of the frogs. Thou canst lay no claim to what constitutes righteousness (and what not). Do not be a self-eulogiser !⁵²—

“ The Chāndāla said,—I have become thy friend. For this reason only I am preaching to thee. Do what is beneficial. Do not, from temptation, do what is sinful.⁵³—

“ Viçvāmitra said,—If thou be a friend desirous of my happiness, do thou then raise me up from this distress ! In that case, relinquishing this dog's haunch, I may consider myself saved by the aid of righteousness (and not by that of sinfulness) !⁵⁴—

“ The Chāndāla said,—I dare not make a present of this piece of meat to thee, nor can I quietly suffer thee to rob me of my own food. If I give thee this meat and if thou take it, thyself being a Brāhmaṇa, both of us will become liable to sink in regions of woe in the next world !⁵⁵—

“ Viçvāmitra said,—By committing this sinful act today I shall certainly save my life which is very sacred. Having saved my life I shall afterwards practise virtue and cleanse my soul. Tell me which of these two is preferable (to die without food, or to save my life by taking this food that is unclean) ?⁵⁶—

“ The Chāndāla said,—In discharging the duties that appertain to one's order or race, one's own self is the best judge (of its propriety or impropriety). Thou thyself knowest which of those two acts is sinful. He who would regard dog's meat as clean food, I think, would in matters of food abstain from nothing !⁵⁷—

"Viçvāmitra said,—In accepting (an unclean present) or in eating (unclean food) there is sin. When one's life, however, is in danger, there is no sin in accepting such a present or eating such food. Besides, the eating of unclean food, when unaccompanied by slaughter and deception and when the act will provoke only mild rebuke, is not a matter of much consequence."⁷⁷—

"The Chāndāla said,—If this be thy reason for eating unclean food, it is then clear thou dost not regard the Veda and Ārya morality ! Taught by what thou art going to do, I see, O foremost of Brāhmaṇas, that there is no sin in disregarding the distinctions between food that is clean and food that is unclean !"⁷⁸—

"Viçvāmitra said,—It is not seen that a person incurs a grave sin by eating (forbidden food). That one becomes fallen by drinking wine is only a wordy precept (for restraining men from drinking). The other forbidden acts (of the same species), whatever they be,—in fact, every sin,—cannot destroy one's merit."⁷⁹

"The Chāndāla said,—That learned person who takes away dog's meat from an unworthy place (like this), from an unclean wretch (like me), from one who (like me) leads such a wicked life, commits an act that is opposed to the behaviour of those that are called good. In consequence, again, of his connection with such a deed, he is certain to suffer the pangs of repentance !"⁸⁰—'

"Bhishma continued,—The Chāndāla, having said these words unto Kuçika's son, became silent. Viçvāmitra then, of cultivated understanding, took away that haunch of dog's meat.⁸¹ The great ascetic, having possessed himself of that piece of dog's meat for saving his life, took it away into the woods and wished with his wife to eat it.⁸² He resolved that having first gratified the deities according to due rites, he should then eat that haunch of dog's meat at his pleasure.⁸³ Igniting a fire according to the Brāhma rites, the ascetic, agreeably to those rites that go by the name of Aindrāgneya, began himself to cook that meat into sacrificial Charu.⁸⁴ He then, O Bhārata, began the ceremonies in honor of the gods

and the *Pitris*, by dividing that *Charu* into as many portions as were necessary, according to the injunctions of the scriptures, and by invoking the gods with Indra at their head (for accepting their shares).⁶⁵ Meanwhile, the chief of the celestials began to pour copiously. Reviving all creatures by those showers, he caused plants and herbs to grow once more.⁶⁶ Viçvāmitra, however, having completed the rites in honor of the gods and the *Pitris* and having gratified them duly, himself ate that meat.⁶⁷ Burning all his sins afterwards by his penances, the sage, after a long time, acquired the most wonderful (ascetic) success.⁶⁸ Even thus, when the end in view is the preservation of life itself, should a high-souled person possessed of learning and acquainted with means rescue his own cheerless self when fallen into distress, by all means in his power.⁶⁹ By having recourse to such understanding one should always preserve his life. A person, if alive, can win religious merit and enjoy happiness and prosperity.¹⁰⁰ For this reason, O son of Kunti, a person of cleansed soul and possessed of learning should live and act in this world, relying upon his own intelligence in discriminating between righteousness and its reverse.' "¹⁰¹

SECTION CXLI.

"Yudhishthira said,—If that which is so horrible and which like falsehood should never be an object of regard, be cited (as duty), then what act is there from which I should forbear? Why also should not robbers then be respected?¹ I am stupefied! My heart is pained! All the ties that bind me to morality are loosened! I cannot tranquillise my mind and venture to act in the way suggested by you!"

"Bhishma said,—I do not instruct thee in respect of duty, taught by what I have heard from the Vedas alone! What I have told thee is the result of wisdom and experience. This is the honey that the learned have gathered.² Kings should gather wisdom from various sources. One cannot accomplish his course through the world with the aid of a morality that is one-sided.³ Duty must spring from the

understanding; and the practices of those that are good should always be ascertained, O son of Kuru! Attend to these words of mine!⁸ Only kings that are possessed of superior intelligence can rule, expecting victory. A king should provide for the observance of morality by the aid of his understanding and guided by knowledge derived from various sources.⁹ The duties of a king can never be discharged by rules drawn from a morality that is one-sided. A weak-minded king can never display wisdom (in the discharge of his duties) in consequence of his not having drawn any wisdom from the examples before him.¹⁰ Righteousness sometimes takes the shape of unrighteousness. The latter also sometimes takes the shape of the former. He who does not know this, becomes confounded when confronted by an actual instance of the kind. Before the occasion comes, one should, O Bhārata, comprehend the circumstances under which righteousness and its reverse become confused.¹¹ Having acquired this knowledge, a wise king should, when the occasion comes, act accordingly, aided by his judgment. The acts he does at such a time are misunderstood by ordinary people.¹² Some persons are possessed of true knowledge. Some persons have false knowledge. Truly ascertaining the nature of each kind of knowledge, a wise king derives knowledge from them that are regarded as good.¹³ They that are really breakers of morality find fault with the scriptures. They that have themselves no wealth proclaim the inconsistencies of the treatises on the acquisition of wealth.¹⁴ Those who seek to acquire knowledge for the object only of caring their sustenance by it, are, O king, sinful besides being enemies of morality.¹⁵ Wicked men, of immature understandings, can never know things truly, even as persons unconversant with scriptures are unable in all their acts to be guided by reason.¹⁶ With eyes directed to the faults of the scriptures, they decry the scriptures. Even if they understand the true meaning of the scriptures, they are still in the habit of proclaiming that scriptural injunctions are unsound.¹⁷ Such men, by decrying the knowledge of others proclaim the superiority of their own knowledge. They have words for their weapons and words for their arrows

and speak as if they are real masters of their sciences.¹⁵ Know, O Bhārata, that they are traders in learning and Rākshasas among men. By the aid of mere pretexts they cast off that morality which has been established by good and wise men.¹⁶ It has been heard by us that the texts of morality are not to be understood by either discussion or one's own intelligence. Indra himself has said that this is the opinion of the sage Vrihaspati.¹⁷ Some are of opinion that no scriptural text has been laid down without a reason. Others again, even if they properly understand the scriptures, never act according to them.¹⁸ One class of wise men declare that morality is nothing else than the approved course of the world. The man of true knowledge should find out for himself the morality laid down for the good.¹⁹ If even a wise man speaks of morality under the influence of wrath or confusion of understanding or ignorance, his deliverances go for nothing.²⁰ Discourses on morality made with the aid of an intelligence that is derived from the true letter and spirit of the scriptures, are worthy of praise and not those which are made with the help of anything else. Even the words heard from an ignorant person, if in themselves they be fraught with sense, come to be regarded as pious and wise.²¹ In days of old, Uçanas said unto the Daiteyas this truth, which should remove all doubts, that scriptures are no scriptures if they cannot stand the test of reason.²² The possession or absence of knowledge that is mixed with doubts is the same thing. It behoves thee to drive off such knowledge after tearing it up by the roots.²³ He who does not listen to these words of mine is to be regarded as one that has suffered himself to be misled. Dost thou not see that thou wert created for the accomplishment of fierce deeds?²⁴ Behold me, O dear child, how, by betaking myself to the duties of the order of my birth, I have despatched innumerable Kshatriyas to heaven! There are some that are not delighted with me for this:²⁵ Goat, hare, and Kshatriya, were created by Brahman for a similar purpose (*viz.*, for being useful to everybody). A Kshatriya, therefore, should incessantly seek the happiness of all creatures.²⁶ The sin that attaches to killing a person that should not be killed

is equal to that which is incurred by not killing one who deserves to be killed. Even such is the established order of things which a weak-minded king thinks of never attending to.²⁷ Therefore, a king should display severity in making all his subjects observe their respective duties. If this is not done, they will prowl like wolves, devouring one another.²⁸ He is a wretch among Kshatriyas in whose territories robbers go about plundering the property of other people like crows taking little fishes from water.²⁹ Appointing high-born men possessed of Vedic knowledge as thy ministers, do thou govern the Earth, protecting thy subjects righteously.³⁰ That Kshatriya who, ignorant of the established customs and contrivances, improperly levies taxes upon his people, is regarded as a eunuch of his order.³¹ A king should neither be severe nor mild. If he rules righteously he deserves praise. A king should not cast off both the qualities; on the other hand, becoming severe (on occasions demanding severity), he should be mild when it is necessary to be so.³² Painful is the observance of Kshatriya duties. I bear a great love for thee. Thou art created for the accomplishment of severe acts. Therefore, do thou rule thy kingdom!³³ Cakra possessed of great intelligence has said that in times of distress the great duty of a king is chastising the wicked and protecting the good.³⁴

"Yudhishtira said,—'Is there any such rule (in respect of kingly duties) which should, under no circumstances, be violated? I ask thee this, O foremost of virtuous persons! Tell me, O grandsire!'"³⁵

"Bhishma said,—'One should always worship Brāhmaṇas venerable for learning, devoted to penances, and rich in conduct conformable to the injunctions of the Vedas. This, indeed, is a high and sacred duty.³⁶ Let thy conduct towards the Brāhmaṇas be always that which thou observest towards the gods. The Brāhmaṇas, if enraged, can inflict diverse kinds of wrong, O king.³⁷ If they be gratified, high fame will be thy share. If otherwise, great will be thy fear. If gratified, the Brāhmaṇas become like nectar. If enraged they become like poison.'³⁸

SECTION CXLI.

"Yudhishtira said,—'O grandsire, O thou of great wisdom, O thou that are conversant with every kind of scripture, tell me what the merit is of one who cherishes a suppliant that craves for protection !'¹

"Bhishma said,—'Great is the merit, O monarch, in cherishing a suppliant. Thou art worthy, O best of the Bharatas, of asking such a question.² Those high-souled kings of old, *viz.*, Civi and others, O king, attained to great bliss in heaven by having protected suppliants.³ It is heard that a pigeon received with respect a suppliant foe according to due rites and even fed him with his own flesh.'⁴

"Yudhishtira said,—'How, indeed, did a pigeon in days of old feed a suppliant foe with his own flesh? What also was the end, O Bhārata, that he won by such conduct?⁵

"Bhishma said,—'Listen, O king, to this excellent story that cleanses the hearer of every sin, the story, *viz.*, that Bhrigu's son (Rāma) had recited to king Muchukunda.⁶ This very question, O son of Prithā, had been put to Bhrigu's son by Muchukunda with due humility.⁷ Unto him desirous of listening with humility the son of Bhrigu narrated this story of how a pigeon, O monarch, won success (entitling him to the highest heavenly bliss).⁸

"The sage said,—'O mighty-armed monarch, listen to me as I narrate to thee this story that is fraught with truths connected with Virtue, Profit, and Pleasure.⁹ A wicked and terrible fowler, resembling the Destroyer himself, used in days of old to wander through the great forest.¹⁰ He was black as a raven and his eyes were of a bloody hue. He looked like Yama himself. His legs were long, his feet short, his mouth large, and his cheeks protruding.¹¹ He had no friend, no relative, no kinsman. He had been cast off by them all for the exceedingly cruel life he led.¹² Indeed, a man of wicked conduct should be renounced from a distance by the wise, for he who injures his own self cannot be expected to do good to others.¹³ Those cruel and wicked-souled

men that take the lives of other creatures are always like poisonous snakes, a source of trouble to all creatures.¹⁴ Taking his nets with him, and killing birds in the woods, he used to sell the meat of those winged creatures, O king, (for livelihood).¹⁵ Following such conduct, the wicked-souled wretch lived for many long years without ever understanding the sinfulness of his life.¹⁶ Accustomed for many long years to sport with his wife in the forest in the pursuit of this profession, and stupified by destiny, no other profession was liked by him.¹⁷ One day as he was wandering through the forest intent on his business, a great storm arose that shook the trees and seemed about to uproot them.¹⁸ In a moment dense masses of clouds appeared on the sky, with flashes of lightning playing amidst them, presenting the aspect of a sea covered with merchant boats and vessels.¹⁹ He of a hundred sacrifices having entered the clouds with a large supply of rain, in a moment the Earth became flooded with water.²⁰ While yet the rain fell in torrents, the fowler lost his senses through fear. Trembling with cold and agitated with fear, he roved through the forest.²¹ The killer of birds failed to find any high spot (which was not under water). The paths of the forest were all submerged.²² In consequence of the force of the shower, many birds were deprived of life or dropped down on the ground. Lions and bears and other animals, availing of some high spots they had found, lay down to rest.²³ All the denizens of the forest were filled with fear in consequence of that frightful storm and shower. Frightened and hungry, they roamed through the woods in packs small and large.²⁴ The fowler, however, with limbs stiffened by cold, could neither stop where he was nor move. While in this state he eyed a she-pigeon lying on the ground, stiffened with cold.²⁵ The sinful wight, though himself in the same predicament, beholding the bird, picked her up and immured her in a cage. Himself overwhelmed with affliction, he scrupled not to overwhelm a fellow-creature with affliction.²⁶ Indeed, the wretch, through force of habit alone, committed that sin even at such a time. He then beheld in the midst of that forest a lordly tree blue as the clouds.²⁷ It was the

resort of myriads of birds desirous of shade and shelter. It seemed to have been placed there by the Creator for the good of all creatures like a good man in the world.²⁸ Soon the sky cleared and became spangled with myriads of stars, presenting the aspect of a magnificent lake smiling with blooming lilies.²⁹ Turning his eyes towards the clear firmament rich with stars, the fowler began to advance, still trembling with cold. Beholding the sky cleared of clouds, he cast his eyes on all sides and seeing that night was already upon him, he began to think,³⁰—My home is at a great distance from where I am!—He then resolved to pass the night under the shade of that tree.³¹ Bowing down to it with joined hands, he addressed that monarch of the forest, saying,—I am a suppliant for shelter unto all the deities that have this tree for their resort!³²—Having said these words, he spread some leaves for a bed, and laid himself down on it, resting his head on a stone. Though overwhelmed with affliction, the man soon fell asleep.' "³³—

SECTION CXLIV.

"Bhishma said,—'In one of the branches of that tree, a pigeon with beautiful feathers, O king, lived for many years with his family.¹ That morning his wife had gone out in search of food but had not yet returned. Seeing that night had come and his wife still unreturned, the bird began to indulge in lamentations.—Oh, great has been the storm and painful the shower that came today! Alas, thou hast not yet returned, O dear wife! Woe is on me, what can be the cause that she has not yet come to us?² Is everything right with that dear spouse of mine in the forest? Separated from her, this my home appears to me empty!³ A house-holder's home, even if filled with sons and grandsons and daughters-in-law and servants, is regarded empty if destitute of the housewife.⁴ One's house is not one's home; one's wife only is one's home. A house without the wife is as desolate as the wilderness.⁵ If that dear wife of mine, of eyes fringed with red, of variegated plumes, and of sweet voice, does not come

back today, my life itself will cease to be of any value.⁷ Of excellent vows, she never eats before I eat, and never bathes before I bathe. She never sits before I sit down, and never lies before I lie down.⁸ She rejoices if I rejoice, and becomes sorry when I am sorry. When I am away she becomes cheerless, and when I am angry she ceases not to speak sweetly.⁹ Ever devoted to her lord and ever relying upon her lord, she was ever employed in doing what was agreeable to and beneficial for her lord. Worthy of praise is that person on Earth who owns such a spouse!¹⁰ That amiable creature knows that I am fatigued and hungry. Devoted to me and constant in her love, my famous spouse is exceedingly sweet-tempered and worships me devoutly!¹¹ Even the foot of a tree is one's home if one lives there with one's spouse as a companion! Without one's spouse, a very palace is truly a desolate wilderness!¹² One's spouse is one's associate in all one's acts of virtue, profit and pleasure. When one sets out for a strange land one's wife is one's trusted companion.¹³ It is said that the wife is the richest possession of her lord. In this world the wife is the only associate of her lord in all the concerns of life.*¹⁴ The wife is ever the best of medicines that one can have in sickness and woe.¹⁵ There is no friend like unto the wife. There is no refuge better than the wife. There is no better ally in the world than the wife in acts undertaken for the acquisition of religious merit.¹⁶ He that has not in his house a wife that is chaste and of agreeable speech, should go to the woods. For such a man there is no difference between home and wilderness.”¹⁷

* The idea is that man comes alone into the world and goes out of it alone. Only the wife is his true associate, for she alone is a sharer of his merits, and without her no merit can be won. The Hindu idea of marriage is a complete union. From the day of marriage the two persons become one and other acts.—T.

SECTION CXLV.

"Bhishma said,—'Hearing these piteous lamentations of the pigeon on the tree, the she-pigeon seized by the fowler began to say to herself as follows.¹

" 'The she-pigeon said,—Whether I have any merit or not, verily there is no limit to my good fortune when my dear lord thus speaks of me!² She is no wife with whom her lord is not content. In the case of women, if their lords be gratified with them all the deities also become so.³ Since the marriage union takes place in the presence of fire, the husband is the wife's highest deity.⁴ That wife with whom her husband is not pleased becomes consumed into ashes, even like a creeper adorned with bunches of flowers in a forest conflagration!⁵—Having reflected thus, the she-pigeon, afflicted with woe, and immured by the fowler within his cage, thus spoke unto her woe-stricken lord.—I shall say what is now beneficial for thee. Hearing me follow thou my counsel! O dear lord, be thou the rescuer of a suppliant!⁶ This fowler lies here by thy abode, afflicted with cold and hunger! Do him the duties of hospitality!⁷ The sin that a person commits by slaying a Brāhmaṇa or that mother of the world, viz., a cow, is equal to that which one incurs by suffering a suppliant to perish (from want of help).⁸ Thou art possessed of knowledge of self. It ever behoves one like thee, therefore, to follow that course which has been ordained for us as pigeons by the order of our birth.^{*10} It has been heard by us that the house-holder who practises virtue according to the measure of his abilities, wins hereafter inexhaustible regions of bliss.¹¹ Thou hast sons. Thou hast progeny. O bird, casting off all kindness for thy own body, therefore, and for winning virtue and profit, offer worship to this fowler so that his heart may be pleased!¹² Do not, O bird, indulge in

* The sense seems to be that our strength, though little, should be employed by us in attending to the duties of hospitality in our own way.—T.

any grief on my account. (See, how unimportant I am !) Thou mayst continue to live, taking other wives !¹³—The amiable she-pigeon, overcome with sorrow, and casting her eyes upon her lord from the fowler's cage within which she had been immured, said these words unto him.' "¹⁴

SECTION CXLVI.

"Bhishma said.—'Hearing these words fraught with morality and reason that were spoken by his wife, the pigeon became filled with great delight and his eyes were bathed in tears of joy.¹ Beholding that fowler whose avocation was the slaughter of birds, the pigeon honored him scrupulously according to the rites laid down in the ordinance.² Addressing him, he said,—Thou art welcome today ! Tell me what I shall do for thee ! Thou shouldst not repine ! This is thy home.*³ Tell me quickly what I am to do and what is thy pleasure ! I ask thee this in affection, for thou hast solicited shelter at our hands.⁴ Hospitality should be shown to even one's foe when he comes to one's house. The tree withdraws not its shade from even the person that approaches it for cutting it down.⁵ One should, with scrupulous care, do the duties of hospitality towards a person that craves for shelter. Indeed, one is especially bound to do so if one happens to lead a life of domesticity that consists of the five sacrifices.⁶ If one, while leading a life of domesticity, does not, from want of judgment, perform the five sacrifices, one loses, according to the scriptures, both this and the next world.⁷ Tell me then trustfully and in intelligible words what thy wishes are ! I will accomplish them all. Do not set thy heart on grief !⁸—Hearing these words of the bird, the fowler replied unto him, saying,—I am stiff with cold. Let provision be made for warming me !⁹—Thus addressed, the bird gathered together a number of dry leaves on the ground, and

* Literally, 'thou art at home,' meaning I will not spare any trouble in making thee feel and enjoy all the comforts of home in this place.—T.

taking a single leaf in his beaks speedily went away for fetching fire.¹⁰ Proceeding to a spot where fire is kept, he obtained a little fire and came back to the spot. He then set fire to those dry leaves,¹¹ and when they blazed forth into a vigorous conflagration, he addressed his guest, saying,—Do thou trustfully and without fear warm thy limbs!¹²—Thus addressed, the fowler said,—So be it!—and set himself to warm his stiffened limbs. Recovering (as it were) his life-breaths, the fowler said unto his winged host,¹³—Hunger is afflicting me. I wish thee to give me some food!—Hearing his words the bird said,¹⁴—I have no stores by which to appease thy hunger! We, denizens of the woods, always live upon what we get every day.¹⁵ Like the ascetics of the forest we never hoard for the morrow!—Having said these words, the bird's face became pale (from shame).¹⁶ He began to reflect silently as to what he should do and mentally deprecated his own method of living.¹⁷ Soon, however, his mind became clear. Addressing the slaughterer of his species, the bird said,—I shall gratify thee! Wait for a moment!¹⁸—Saying these words he ignited a fire with the help of some dry leaves, and filled with joy, said,¹⁹—I heard in former days from high-souled *Rishis* and gods and *Pitris* that there is great merit in honoring a guest.²⁰ O amiable one, be kind to me! I tell thee truly that my heart is set upon honoring thee that art my guest!²¹—Having formed this resolution, the high-souled bird, with a smiling face, thrice circumambulated that fire and then entered its flames.²² Beholding the bird enter that fire, the fowler began to think, and asked himself, —What have I done!²³ Alas, dark and terrible will be my sin, without doubt, in consequence of my own acts! I am exceedingly cruel and worthy of reprobation!²⁴—Indeed, observing the bird lay down his life, the fowler, deprecating his own acts, began to indulge in copious lamentations like these.²⁵

SECTION CXLVII.

"Bhishma said,—'The fowler, seeing the pigeon fall into the fire, became filled with compassion and once more said,¹—Alas, cruel and senseless that I am, what have I done ! I am certainly a mean wretch ! Great will be my sin for everlasting years!²—Indulging in such self-reproaches he began to say repeatedly,—I am unworthy of credit ! My understanding is wicked ! I am ever sinful in my resolves!³ Alas, abandoning all kinds of honorable occupation, I have become a fowler ! A cruel wretch that I am, without doubt, this high-souled pigeon, by laying down his own life, has read me a grave lesson!⁴ Abandoning wives and sons, I shall certainly cast off my very life-breaths that are so dear ! The high-souled pigeon has taught me that duty!⁵ From this day, denying every comfort to my body, I shall wear it out even as a shallow tank in the season of summer!⁶ Capable of bearing hunger, thirst, and penances, reduced to emaciation, and covered with visible veins all over, I shall, by diverse kinds of fasts, practise such vows as have a reference to the other world!⁷ Alas, by giving up his body, the pigeon has shown the worship that should be paid to a guest ! Taught by his example, I shall henceforth practise righteousness. Righteousness is the highest refuge (of all creatures) ! Indeed, I shall practise such righteousness as has been seen in the righteous pigeon, that foremost of all winged creatures!⁸—Having formed such a resolution and said these words, that fowler, once of fierce deeds, proceeded to make an unreturning tour of the world,* observing for the while the most rigid vows.⁹ He threw away his stout staff, his sharp-pointed iron-stick, his nets and springs, and his iron cage, and set at liberty the she-pigeon that he had seized and immured.'¹⁰

* *Mahaprasthana* is literally an unreturning departure. When a person leaves home for wandering through the world till death puts a stop to his wanderings, he is said to go on *Mahaprasthana*.—T.

SECTION CXLVIII.

"Bhishma said,—'After the fowler had left that spot, the she-pigeon, remembering her husband and afflicted with grief on his account, wept copiously and indulged in these lamentations:¹—I cannot, O dear lord, recollect a single instance of thy having done me an injury ! Widows, even if mothers of many children, are still miserable ! Bereft of husband, a woman becomes helpless and an object of pity with her friends.² I was always cherished by thee, and in consequence of the great respect thou hadst for me I was always honored by thee with sweet, agreeable, charming, and delightful words !³ I sported with thee in valleys, in springs of rivers, and on delightful tops of trees !⁴ I was also made happy by thee while roving with thee through the skies ! I used to sport with thee before, O dear lord, but where are those joys now ?⁵ Limited are the gifts of the father, of the brother, and of the son to a woman. The gifts that her husband alone makes to her are unlimited ! What woman is there that would not, therefore, adore her lord ?⁶ A woman has no protector like her lord, and no happiness like her lord. Abandoning all her wealth and possessions, a woman should take to her lord as her only refuge.⁷ Life here is of no use to me, O lord, now that I am separated from thee ! What chaste woman is there that would, when deprived of her lord, venture to bear the burden of life ?⁸—Filled with sorrow and indulging in such piteous lamentations, the she-pigeon, devoted to her lord, cast herself on the blazing fire.⁹ She then beheld her (deceased) husband adorned with bracelets, seated on a (celestial) car, and adored by many high-souled and meritorious beings standing around him.¹⁰ Indeed, there he was in the firmament, decked with fine garlands and attired in excellent robes, and adorned with every ornament. Around him were innumerable celestial cars ridden by beings who had acted meritoriously while in this world.¹¹ Seated on his own celestial car, the bird ascended to heaven, and obtaining proper honors for his deeds in this world, continued to sport in joy, accompanied by his wife.'¹²

SECTION CXLIX.

" Bhishma said,—'The fowler, O king, happened to see that pair while seated on their celestial car. Beholding the couple he became filled with sorrow (at the thought of his own misfortune) and began to reflect upon the means of obtaining the same end.¹ And he said to himself,—I must, by austerities like those of the pigeon, attain to such a high end!—Having formed this resolution, the fowler, who had lived by the slaughter of birds, set out on an unreturning journey.² Without any endeavor (for obtaining food) and living upon air alone, he cast off all affections from desire of acquiring heaven.³ After he had proceeded for some distance, he saw an extensive and delightful lake full of cool and pure water, adorned with lotuses and teeming with diverse kinds of water-fowl.⁴ Without doubt, the very sight of such a lake is capable of slaking the desire for drink of a thirsty person. Emaciated with fasts, the fowler, however, O king,⁵ without casting his eyes upon it, gladly penetrated a forest inhabited by beasts of prey, having ascertained previously its wide extent. After he had entered the forest, he became much afflicted by sharp-pointed thorns.⁶ Lacerated and torn by prickles, and covered all over with blood, he began to wander in that forest destitute of men but abounding with animals of diverse species.⁷ Sometime after, in consequence of the friction of some mighty trees caused by a powerful wind, a widespread conflagration arose.⁸ The raging element, displaying a splendour like to what it assumes at the end of the *Yuga*, began to consume that large forest teeming with tall trees and thick bushes and creepers.⁹ Indeed, with flames fanned by the wind and myriads of sparks flying about in all directions, the all-consuming deity began to burn that dense forest abounding with birds and beasts.¹⁰ The fowler, desirous of casting off his body, ran with a delighted heart towards that spreading conflagration.¹¹ Consumed by that fire the fowler became cleansed of all his sins and attained, O best of the Bharatas, to high success.¹² The fever of his

heart dispelled, he at last beheld himself in heaven, shining in splendour like Indra in the midst of *Yakshas* and *Gandharvas* and persons crowned with ascetic success.¹³ Thus, indeed, the pigeon and his devoted spouse, with the fowler, ascended to heaven for their meritorious acts.¹⁴ The woman who thus follows her lord speedily ascends to heaven and shines in splendour there like the she-pigeon of whom I have spoken.¹⁵ Even this is the old history of the high-souled fowler and the pigeon. Even thus did they earn a highly meritorious end by their righteous acts.¹⁶ No evil befalls the person who listens every day to this story or who recites it every day, even if error invades his mind.*¹⁷ O Yudhishthira, O foremost of all righteous persons, the protection of a suppliant is truly a high act of merit! Even the slayer of a cow, by practising this duty, may be cleansed of sin.¹⁸ That man, however, will never be cleansed who slays a suppliant. By listening to this sacred and sin-cleansing story one becomes freed from distress and attains to heaven at last.' "¹⁹

SECTION CL.

"Yudhishthira said,—'O best of the Bharatas, when a person commits sin from want of judgment, how may he be cleansed from it? Tell me everything about it!'

"Bhishma said,—'I shall in this connection recite to thee the old narrative, applauded by the *Rishis*, of what the regenerate Indrota, the son of Cunaka, said unto Janamejaya.² There was, in days of yore, a king possessed of great energy, called Janamejaya, who was the son of Parikshit. That lord of Earth on one occasion, from want of judgment, became guilty of killing a Brāhmaṇa.³ Upon this, all the Brāhmaṇas together with his priests abandoned him. Burning day and night with regret, the king retired into the woods.⁴ Deserted by his subjects too, he took this step for achieving high merit. Consumed by repentance, the monarch underwent the most

* The theory is that all distresses arise originally from mental error which clouds the understanding. Vide *Bhagavadgītā*.—T.

rigid austerities.⁵ For washing himself of the sin of Brāhmaṇicide he interrogated many Brāhmaṇas, and wandered from country to country over the whole Earth !⁶ I shall now tell thee the story of his expiation. Burning with the remembrance of his sinful act, Janamejaya wandered about.⁷ One day, in course of his wanderings, he met Indrota, the son of Cunaka, of rigid vows, and approaching him touched his feet.⁸ The sage, beholding the king before him, reproved him gravely, saying,—Thou hast committed a great sin. Thou hast been guilty of foeticide. Why hast thou come here?⁹ What business hast thou with us? Do not touch me by any means! Go, go away! Thy presence does not give us pleasure!¹⁰ Thy person smells like blood. Thy appearance is like that of a corpse. Though impure, thou seemest to be pure, and though dead thou movest like a living being!¹¹ Dead within, thou art of impure soul, for thou art ever intent upon sin! Though thou sleepest and wakest, thy life, however, is passed in great misery!¹² Thy life, O king, is useless! Thou livest most miserably! Thou hast been created for ignoble and sinful deeds.¹³ Sires wish for sons from desire of obtaining diverse kinds of blessings, and hoping they would perform penances and sacrifices, worship the gods, and practise renunciation.*¹⁴ Behold, the whole race of thy ancestors has fallen into hell in consequence of thy acts! All the hopes thy sires had placed upon thee have become fruitless!¹⁵ Thou livest in vain, for thou art always inspired with hatred and malice towards the Brāhmaṇas,—them, that is, by worshipping whom other men obtain long life, fame, and heaven!¹⁶ Leaving this world (when the time comes), thou shalt have to fall (into hell) with head downwards and remain in that posture for innumerable years in consequence of thy sinful deeds!¹⁷ There thou shalt be tortured by vultures and peacocks having iron beaks. Returning thence into this world, thou shalt have to take birth in a wretched order of creatures!¹⁸ If thou thinkest, O king, that this world is nothing and that the next world is the shadow of

* Making gifts, &c.—T.

a shadow, the myrmidons of Yama in the infernal regions will convince thee, dispelling thy disbelief ! ”¹⁸—

SECTION CLI.

“Bhishma said,—‘Thus addressed, Janamejaya replied unto the sage, saying,—Thou rebukest one that deserves to be rebuked ! Thou censorest one that is deserving of censure !’ Thou upbradest me and my acts. I implore thee to be graceful towards me ! All my acts have been sinful. I burn, however, with repentance as if I am in the midst of blazing fire !² My mind, in remembrance of my deeds, is exceedingly cheerless. Verily, I am much afraid of Yama !³ How can I bear to live without extracting that dart from my heart ? O Caunaka, suppressing all thy wrath, instruct me now !⁴ Formerly I used to show great regard for Brāhmaṇas. I solemnly declare that I shall once more show the same regard for them ! Let not my line be extinct ! Let not the race in which I am born sink into the dust !⁵ It is not proper that they who have wronged Brāhmaṇas and have for that, in consequence of the injunctions of the Vedas, forfeited all claim to the respect of the world and to social intercourse with their fellowmen, should have any bearer of their names for continuing their races !⁶ I am overwhelmed with despair. I, therefore, repeat my resolves (about mending my conduct). I pray you to protect me like sages that do not accept gifts protecting the poor.⁷ Sinful wights abstaining from sacrifices never attain to heaven.* Leaving (this world), they have to pass their time in the pits of hell like Pulindas and Khasas.^{†⁸} Ignorant as I am, give me wisdom like a learned preceptor to his pupil or like a sire to his son ! Be gratified with me, O Caunaka !⁹—

“Caunaka said,—What wonder is there that a person

* Here *amum* (the accusative of *adas*) evidently means ‘that’ and not ‘this.’ I think the reference, therefore, is to heaven and not to this world.—T.

† These are *Mlechha* tribes of impure behaviour.—T.

destitute of wisdom should do many improper acts? Knowing this, a person of real wisdom is never angry with creatures (when they become guilty of folly).^{*10} By ascending upon the top of wisdom's palace, one grieves for others, one's own-self being then too pure for becoming an object of other people's grief. In consequence of one's wisdom one surveys all creatures in the world like a person on a mountain-top surveying people below.¹¹ The person who becomes an object of censure with good men, who hates good men and who hides himself from their view, never succeeds in obtaining any blessing and never understands the propriety of acts.¹²⁺ Thou knowest what the energy and the nobility of the Brāhmaṇa is as laid down in the Veda and other scriptures. Act now in such a way that tranquillity of heart may be thine and let Brāhmaṇas be thy refuge!¹³ If the Brāhmaṇas cease to be angry with thee, that will ensure thy felicity in heaven. If, again, thou repentest in sin, thy sight will be clear and thou wilt succeed in beholding righteousness!¹⁴—

"Janamejaya said,—I am repenting for my sins. I will never again seek to extinguish virtue! I desire to obtain blessedness. Be thou gratified with me!¹⁵—

"Caunaka said,—Dispelling arrogance and pride, O king, I wish thee to show regard for me!‡ Employ thyself in the good of all creatures, ever remembering the mandates of righteousness.¹⁶ I am not reproving thee from fear or narrowness of mind or covetousness! Listen now, with these Brāhmaṇas here, to the words of truth I utter!¹⁷ I do not ask for anything. I shall, however, instruct thee in the ways of righteousness. All persons will croak and bray and cry fie on me (for what I am going to do).¹⁸ They will even call me sinful. My kinsmen and friends will discard me.§

* The Bombay edition reads this verse differently.—T.

† Read differently in the Bombay edition.—T.

‡ I. e., for my instructions.—T.

§ So great was the repugnance felt for the slayer of a Brāhmaṇa that to even talk with him was regarded a sin. To instruct such a man in the truths of the Vedas and of morality was to desecrate religion itself.—T.

Without doubt, however, my kinsmen and friends, hearing the words I speak, will succeed in vigorously crossing the difficulties of life.¹⁹ Some that are possessed of great wisdom will understand (my motives) rightly. Know, O child, what my views are, O Bhārata, in respect of the Brāhmaṇas!²⁰ Do thou (after listening to me) act in such a way that they may, through my efforts, obtain every blessing! Do thou also, O king, pledge thy word that thou wilt not again injure the Brāhmaṇas!²¹ —

“Janamejaya said,—I swear, touching even thy feet, that I shall never again, in thought, word, or deed, injure the Brāhmaṇas!—”²²

SECTION CLII.

“Caunaka said,—I shall for these reasons discourse to thee of righteousness, to thee whose heart has been exceedingly agitated! Possessed of knowledge and great strength, and with a contented heart, thou seekest righteousness of thy own will!²³ A king, first becoming exceedingly stern, then shows compassion and does good to all creatures by his acts. This is certainly very wonderful.²⁴ People say that that king who commences with sternness burns the whole world. Thou wert stern before. But thou turnest thy eyes on righteousness now!²⁵ Forsaking luxurious food and all articles of enjoyment, thou hast betaken thyself for a long time to rigid penances. All this, O Janamejaya, is certain to appear wonderful to those kings that are sunk in sin.²⁶ That he who has affluence should become liberal, or that he who is endued with wealth of asceticism should become reluctant to spend it, is not at all wonderful. It has been said that the one does not live at a distance from the other.²⁷ That which

* This version of 5 is offered tentatively. That a person possessed of affluence should become charitable is not wonderful. An ascetic, again, is very unwilling to exercise his power. (Witness Agastya's unwillingness to create wealth for gratifying his spouse). What is meant by these two persons not living at a distance from each other is that the same cause which makes an affluent person charitable operates to make an ascetic careful of the kind of wealth he has.—T.

is ill-judged produces misery in abundance. That, on the other hand, which is accomplished with the aid of sound judgment leads to excellent results.⁸ Sacrifice, gift, compassion, the Vedas, and truth, O lord of Earth,—these five,—are cleansing. The sixth is penance well-performed. This last, O Janamejaya, is highly cleansing for kings.⁹ By betaking thyself to it properly, thou art certain to earn great merit and blessedness. Sojourn to sacred spots has also been said to be highly cleansing.¹⁰ In this connection are cited the following verse sung by Yayāti:—That mortal who would earn life and longevity should, after having performed sacrifices with devotion, renounce them (in old age) and practise penances.¹¹—The field of Kuru has been said to be sacred. The river Saraswati has been said to be more so. The *tirthas* of the Saraswati are more sacred than the Saraswati herself; and the *tirtha* called Prithudaka is more sacred than all the *tirthas* of the Saraswati. One that has bathed in Prithudaka and drunk its waters will not have to grieve for a premature death.¹² Thou shouldst go to *Mahasaras*, to all the *tirthas* designated by the name of Pushkara, to Prabhāsa, to the northern lake Mānasa, and to Kālodaka. Thou shalt then regain life and acquire longevity.¹³ Lake Mānasa is on the spot where the Saraswati and the Driçadwati mingle with each other. A person possessed of Vedic knowledge should bathe in these places. Manu has said that liberality is the best of all duties, and that renunciation is better than liberality.¹⁴ In this connection is cited the following verse composed by Satyavat. (One should act) as a child full of simplicity and destitute of either merit or sin.¹⁵ As regards all creatures there is in this world neither misery nor happiness. (That which is called misery and that which is called happiness are the results of a diswrought imagination). Even this is the true nature of all living creatures.¹⁶ Of all creatures, their lives are superior who have betaken themselves to renunciation and abstained from acts both meritorious and sinful. I shall now tell thee these acts which

* That which is *asamikshitam* is *samagram kārpanyam*.—T.

are best for a king.¹⁵ By putting forth thy might and liberality do thou conquer heaven, O king ! That man who possesses the attributes of might and energy succeeds in attaining to righteousness.*¹⁶ Do thou rule the Earth, O king, for the sake of the Brāhmaṇas and for the sake of happiness. Thou usedst formerly to condemn the Brāhmaṇas. Do thou gratify them now.¹⁷ Though they have cried fie on thee and though they have deserted thee, do thou still, guided by knowledge of self, solemnly pledge thyself never to injure them ! Engaged in acts proper for thee, seek what is for thy highest good.¹⁸ Amongst rulers some one becomes as cool as snow ; some one, as fierce as fire ; some one becomes like a plough (uprooting all enemies) ; and some one, again, becomes like a thunder-bolt (suddenly scorching his foes).¹⁹ He who wishes to prevent self-destruction should never mix with wicked wights for general or special reasons.²⁰ From a sinful act committed only once, one may cleanse one's self by repenting for it. From a sinful act committed twice, one may cleanse one's self by vowing never to commit it again.²¹ From such an act committed thrice, one may cleanse one's self by the resolution to bear one's self righteously ever afterwards. By committing such an act repeatedly, one may cleanse one's self by a sojourn to sacred places. One who is desirous of obtaining prosperity should do all that results in blessedness.²² They who live amidst fragrant odors themselves become fragrant in consequence. They, on the other hand, who live in the midst of foul stench themselves become foul.²³ One devoted to the practice of ascetic penances is soon cleansed of all one's sins. By worshipping the (*homa*) fire for a year, one stained by diverse sins becomes purified.²⁴ One guilty of foeticide is cleansed by worshipping the fire for three years. One guilty of foeticide becomes cleansed at even a hundred *Yojanas* from Mahāsara, or the *tirthas* called Pushkara, or Prabhāsa, or Mānasa on the north, if only one

* Nilakantha explains that *valī* here means patience (strength to bear), and *ojas* (energy) means restraint of the senses.—T.

sets out for any of them.²⁵ A slayer of creatures is cleansed of his sins by saving from imminent peril as many creatures of that particular species as have been slain by him.²⁶ Mana has said that by diving in water after thrice reciting the *Aghamarshana mantras*, one reaps the fruits of the final bath in a Horse-sacrifice.²⁷ Such an act very soon cleanses one of all one's sins, and one regains in consequence the esteem of the world. All creatures become obedient to such a person, like helpless idiots (obedient to those that surround them).²⁸ The gods and *Asuras*, in days of yore, approaching the celestial preceptor Vrihaspati, O king, humbly enquired of him, saying,—Thou knowest, O great *Rishi*, the fruits of virtue, as also the fruits of those other acts that lead to hell in the next world.²⁹ Does not that person succeed in liberating himself from both merit and sin with whom the two (weal and woe) are equal? Tell us, O great *Rishi*, what the fruits of righteousness are, and how does a righteous person dispel his sins?³⁰—

"Vrihaspati answered,—If, having committed sin through folly, one does meritorious acts understanding their nature, one succeeds, by such righteousness, in cleansing one's self from sin even as a piece of dirty cloth is washed clean by means of some saline substance.³¹ One should not boast after having committed sin. By having recourse to faith and by freeing one's self from malice, one succeeds in obtaining blessedness.³² That person who covers the faults, even when exposed, of good men, obtains blessedness even after commit-

* Both the vernacular translators have rendered the second line of verse 25 wrongly. They seem to think that a person by setting out for any of the sacred waters from a distance of a hundred *yojanas* becomes cleansed. If this meaning be accepted, then no man who lives within a hundred *yojanas* of any of them has any chance of being cleansed. The sense, of course, is that such is the efficacy of these *rīthas* that a man becomes cleansed by approaching even to a spot within a hundred *yojanas* of their several sites.—T.

† These *mantras* form a part of the morning, noon, and evening prayer of every Brahmana. *Aghamarshana* was a Vedic *Rishi* of great sanctity.

ting faults.²² As the sun rising at morn dispels all darkness, one dispels all one's sins by acting righteously.—”²³

“Bhishma continued,—Indrota the son of Cunaka, having said these words unto king Janamejaya, assisted him, by his ministrations, in the performance of the Horse-sacrifice.²⁴ The king, cleansed of his sins, and regaining blessedness, shone with splendour like a blazing fire, and that slayer of foes then entered his kingdom like Soma in his full form entering heaven.”²⁵

SECTION CLIII.

“Yudhishthira said,—‘Hast thou, O grandsire, ever seen or heard of any mortal restored to life after having succumbed to death?’¹

“Bhishma said,—‘Listen, O king, to this story of the discourse between a vulture and a jackal as it happened of old. Indeed, the occurrence took place in the forest of Naimisha.² Once upon a time a Brähmana had, after great difficulties, obtained a son of large expansive eyes. The child died of infantile convulsions.³ Some (amongst his kinsmen), exceedingly agitated by grief and indulging in loud lamentations, took up the boy of tender years, that sole wealth of his family.⁴ Taking the deceased child they proceeded in the direction of the crematorium. Arrived there they began to take the child from one another's breast and cry more bitterly in grief.⁵ Recollecting with heavy hearts the former speeches of their darling again and again, they were unable to return home casting the body on the bare ground.⁶ Summoned by their cries, a vulture came there and said these words:—Go ye away and do not tarry, ye that have to cast off but one child!⁷ Kinsmen always go away leaving on this spot thousands of men and thousands of women brought here in course of Time.⁸ Behold, the whole universe is subject to weal and woe! Union and disunion may be seen in turns.⁹ They that have come to the crematorium bringing with them the dead bodies of kinsmen, and they that sit by those bodies (from affection), themselves disappear from the world in consequence of their

own acts when the allotted periods of their own lives run out.¹⁰ There is no need of your lingering in the crematorium, this horrible place, that is full of vultures and jackals and that abounds with skeletons and inspires every creature with dread!¹¹ Whether friend or foe, no one ever comes back to life having once succumbed to the power of Time. Such, indeed, is the fate of all creatures.¹² In this world of mortals, every one that is born is sure to die. Who shall restore to life one that is dead and gone on the way ordained by the Destroyer?¹³ At this hour when men are about to close their daily toil, the Sun is retiring to the *Asta* hills. Go ye to your homes, casting off this affection for the child!¹⁴—Hearing these words of the vulture, the grief of the kinsmen seemed to abate, and placing the child on the bare ground they prepared to go away.¹⁵ Assuring themselves of the fact that the child had died and despairing of seeing him again, they began to retrace their steps, indulging in loud lamentations.¹⁶ Assured beyond doubt, and despairing of restoring the dead to life, they cast off that offspring of their race, and prepared to turn back from that spot.¹⁷ At this time a jackal, black as a raven, issued out of his hole and addressed those departing kinsmen, saying,— Surely, ye that are kinsmen of that deceased child have no affection!¹⁸ There the Sun still shineth in the sky, ye fools! Indulge your feelings, without fear! Multifarious are the virtues of the hour. This one may come back to life!¹⁹ Spreading a few blades of *Kuca* grass on the ground and abandoning that dear child on the crematorium, why do ye go away with hearts of steel and casting off every affection for the darling?²⁰ Surely, ye have no affection for that sweet-speeched child of tender years, whose words, soon as they left his lips, used to gladden you greatly!²¹ Behold the affection that even birds and beasts bear towards their offspring! Theirs is no return for bringing up their young ones!²² Like the sacrifices of the *Rishis* (that are never undertaken from desire of fruit or rewards) the affection of quadrupeds, of birds, and insects, bears no reward in heaven.²³ Though delighting in their children, they are never seen to derive any benefit

from the latter either here or hereafter. Yet they cherish their young ones with affection !²⁴ Their children, growing up, never cherish them in age. Yet are not they grieved when they do not behold their little ones?²⁵ Where, indeed, is affection to be seen in human beings that they would own the influence of grief ?* Where would you go leaving here this child who is the perpetuator of his race ?⁶ Do you shed tears for him for some time, and do you look at him a little longer with affection ! Objects so dear are, indeed, difficult to abandon.²⁷ It is friends and not others that wait by the side of him that is weak, of him that is prosecuted in a court of law, of him that is borne towards the crematorium.²⁸ Life-breaths are dear unto all, and all feel the influence of affection. Behold the affection that is cherished by even those that belong to the intermediate species !†²⁹ How, indeed, can you go away, casting off this boy of eyes large as the petals of the lotus, and handsome as a newly-married youth washed clean and adorned with floral garlands ?—Hearing these words of the jackal that had been indulging in such expressions of touching grief, the men turned back for the sake of the corpse.³¹

“The vulture said,—Alas, ye men destitute of strength of mind, why do ye turn back at the bidding of a cruel and moan jackal of little intelligence ?³² Why do you mourn for that compound of five elements deserted by their presiding deities, no longer tenanted (by the soul), motionless, and stiff as a piece of wood ? Why do you not grieve for your own selves ?³³ Do you practise austere penances by which you will succeed in cleansing yourselves from sin ! Everything may be had by means of penances. What will lamentations do ?³⁴ Ill-luck is born with the body.‡ It is in

* In the first line of 26 the correct reading is *Kutah* and not *Kritah* as adopted by the Burdwan translators.—T.

† I. e., beasts and birds. The veracular translators wrongly render it—‘Behold the affection that is cherished by those that are good towards even the beasts and birds !’—T.

‡ The correct reading is *Mrittind* (as in the Bombay text) and not *Mrityund*. The Burdwan version adopts the incorrect reading.—T.

consequence of that ill-luck that this boy has departed, plunging you into infinite grief!¹²⁵ Wealth, kine, gold, precious gems, children, all have their root in penances. Penances again are the result of *yoga* (union of the soul with Godhead).¹²⁶ Amongst creatures, the measure of weal or woe is dependant on the acts of a previous life. Indeed, every creature comes into the world, taking with him his own measure of weal and woe.¹²⁷ The son is not bound by the acts of the sire, or the sire by those of the son. Bound by their own acts good and bad, all have to travel by this common road.¹²⁸ Duly practise all the duties, and abstain from acts of unrighteousness! Reverentially wait, according to the directions of the scriptures, upon the gods and the Brāhmaṇas!¹²⁹ Cast off sorrow and cheerlessness, and abstain from parental affection! Leave the child on this exposed ground, and go ye away without delay!¹³⁰ The actor alone enjoys the fruits of acts, good or bad, that he does. What concern have kinsmen with them?¹³¹ Casting off a (deceased) kinsman however dear, kinsmen leave this spot. With eyes bathed in tears, they go away, ceasing to display affection for the dead.¹³² Wise or ignorant, rich or poor, every one succumbs to Time, endued with acts good and bad.¹³³ What will you do by mourning? Why do you grieve for one that is dead? Time is the lord of all, and in obedience to his very nature he casts an equal eye on all things.¹³⁴ In pride of youth or in helpless infancy, bearing the weight of years or lying in the mother's womb, every one is subject to be assailed by Death. Such, indeed, is the course of the world!—¹³⁵

"The jackal said,—Alas, the affection cherished by your weeping selves that are overwhelmed with grief for your deceased child has been lessened by that light-brained vulture!¹³⁶ Even this must be the case, since in consequence of his well-applied words fraught with tranquillity and capable of producing conviction, there that one goes back to the town, casting off affection that is so difficult to abandon!¹³⁷ Alas, I had supposed that great is the grief felt by men indulging in loud lamentations for the death of a child and for the corpse on a crematorium, like that of kine bereft of calves!¹³⁸

Today, however, I understand what the measure of grief is of human beings on earth ! Witnessing their great affection I had shed tears myself !⁶⁰ (It seems however, that their affection is not strong !) One should always exert. Thence does one succeed through destiny. Exertion and destiny, joining together, produce fruits.⁶¹ One should always exert with hopefulness. How can happiness be had from despondency ? Objects of desire may be won by resolution. Why then do you go back so heartlessly ?⁶² Where do you go, abandoning in the wilderness this son of your own loins, this perpetuator of the race of his sires ?⁶³ Stay here till the sun sets and the evening twilight comes. You may then take away this boy with yourselves or stay here with him ⁶⁴—

"The vulture said,—I am, ye men, a full thousand years of age today, but I have never seen a dead creature, male or female or of ambiguous sex, revive after death !⁶⁴ Some die in the womb; some die soon after birth; some die (in infancy) while crawling (on all fours); some die in youth; and some in old age.⁶⁵ The fortunes of all creatures, including even beasts and birds, are unstable. The periods of life of all mobile and immobile creatures are fixed beforehand.⁶⁶ Bereaved of spouses and dear ones and filled with sorrow for (the death of) children, men leave this spot every day with agonised hearts for returning home.⁶⁷ Leaving on this spot both friends and foes numbering by thousands, kinsmen afflicted with grief go back to their homes.⁶⁸ Cast off this lifeless body which has no longer any animal heat in it and which is as stiff as a piece of wood ! Why then do you not go away, leaving the body of this child which has become like a piece of wood and whose life has entered a new body ?⁶⁹ This affection (which ye are displaying) is unmeaning, and this hugging of the child is fruitless. He does not see with his eyes or hear with his ears.⁷⁰ Leaving him here, go ye away without delay !⁷¹ Thus addressed by me in words which are apparently cruel but which in reality are fraught with reason and have a direct bearing with the high religion of emancipation, go ye back to your respective homes !⁷²— Addressed thus by the vulture endued with wisdom and know-

ledge and capable of imparting intelligence and awakening the understanding, those men prepared themselves to turn their backs upon the crematorium. Grief, indeed, increaseth to twice its measure at sight of its object and at the remembrance of the acts of that object (in life).⁶³ Having heard these words of the vulture, the men resolved to leave the spot. Just at that time the jackal, coming thither with quick steps, cast his eyes on the child lying in the sleep of death.⁶⁴

"The jackal said,—Why, indeed, do you leave, at the vulture's bidding, this child of golden complexion, adorned with ornaments, and capable of giving the obsequial cake to his ancestors?⁶⁵ If you abandon him, your affection will not come to an end, nor these piteous lamentations! On the other hand, your grief will certainly be greater.⁶⁶ It is heard that a Cudra named Cimvuka having been slain and righteousness having been upheld by Rāma of true prowess, a (dead) Brāhmaṇa child was restored to life.⁶⁷ Similarly the son of the royal sage Cweta had died (prematurely). But the monarch, devoted to virtue, succeeded in reviving his dead child.⁶⁸ After the same manner, in your case also, some sage or deity may be willing to grant your desire and show compassion to you that are crying so piteously!⁶⁹—Thus addressed by the jackal, the men, afflicted with grief and full of affection for the child, retraced their steps, and placing the child's head on their laps one after another, began to indulge in copious lamentations. Summoned by their cries, the vulture, coming to that spot, once more spoke unto them as follows.

* The allusion is to the story of Rāma having restored a dead Brāhmaṇa boy. During Rāma's righteous reign there were no premature deaths in his kingdom. It happened, however, one day that a Brāhmaṇa father came to Rāma's court and complained of the premature death of his son. Rāma instantly began to enquire after the cause. Some sinful act in some corner of the kingdom, it was suspected, had caused the deed. Soon enough Rāma discovered a Cudra of the name of Camvuka engaged in the heart of a deep forest in ascetic penances. The king instantly cut off the man's head inasmuch as a Cudra by birth had no right to do what that man was doing. As soon as righteousness was upheld, the deceased Brāhmaṇa boy revived. (*Rimtyana, Utara kandam*).—T.

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